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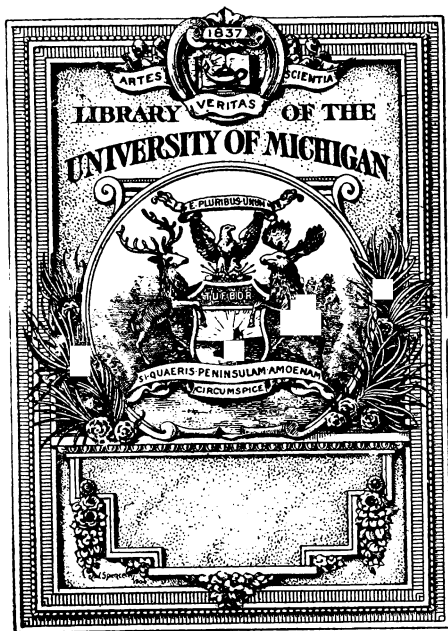
SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS

• NEW YORK •

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*Number 1*

*May, 1883*

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# TOPICS OF THE TIME

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

*EDITED BY*

TITUS MUNSON COAN

NEW YORK

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

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1883

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The publishers need hardly say, that they have no desire to trench in any way upon the editorial domain of "The Century." But they do not see any possibility of the public's confusing a series of volumes of essays, by European writers, with the editorial studies which the readers of "The Century" have the privilege of enjoying from month to month; and it does not therefore seem to them necessary to alter their title.

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# SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

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## WORLD-CROWDING.

AN ADDRESS BY ROBERT GIFFEN, PRESIDENT OF THE  
STATISTICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

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### THE TREMENDOUS GROWTH OF POPULATION.

WHAT I propose to discuss to-night are some of the more common figures which lie on the surface of the most accessible books. I shall deal more especially with the most common figures of all, viz., those of population. The utility of the most general notion which we derive from statistics of the distribution of the earth's surface among different races and nations is palpable. We can see at once that a small corner like Europe is closely peopled by the European family of nations, while the northern peoples of that family also possess a large new field of territory in North America, Australia, and North Asia; and the more southern peoples, a large new field of territory in Central and South America. The European family is

thus, *de facto*, in possession of a large tract of the earth's surface for its own habitation; perhaps a half, or more, of the area available for producing the food of civilized races. Further consideration would show what races in particular, among the nations of Europe, have this inheritance; but the point is the predominance of the European race, in mere extent of territory, coupled with the peculiarity that the bulk of this population is still living on a comparatively narrow tract in Europe. The rest of the world—China, India, and Africa—is possessed by races of greatly differing type, on whose territory Europeans do not press as colonists, though they may settle in small numbers as governors or traders, or both. Granting, on the average, a difference in point of material strength per unit of population between these European and all other races, it is easy to understand at once the idea that the future of civilization belongs to the European group, and that the problem of how the other races are to live in harmony with the European group without being jostled, and in what way they are to be affected by the European civilization, is one of the most curious presented for the solution of modern societies. If the European numbers were less, the problem might well be, whether European civilization, in spite of its assumed superiority in type, could maintain itself. The numbers and rate of in-

crease being what they are, it is easy to see that the main problem resulting from the relations of the European and non-European races cannot be, whether the European civilization will be able to maintain itself, but how it will be affected by its varying relations to the other races.

#### RELATIVE POSITION OF THE EUROPEAN POWERS.

Confining ourselves again to the European group, and first of all to the nations within European limits, another leading fact in international politics is immediately suggested by the statement of the numbers of the people. This is the existence of five leading powers, — Russia, Germany, Austria, France, and the United Kingdom, — each greatly stronger than any of the other powers not among the five (except two); each big enough to “take care of itself,” though there are, of course, differences of strength between them; and, besides these, the two others excepted, viz., Italy and Spain, which come short of a first place, but by a less degree than the minor states. All these relations of the great powers are based largely on the mere enumeration of the peoples. Three out of the five — viz., France, Austria-Hungary, and the United Kingdom — have each about the same population, in round numbers, 35,000,000 to 38,000,000; one of the others, Germany, has

about one-fourth more ; and Russia only has a much larger number in Europe, viz., 80,000,000. While numbers, therefore, are not every thing, or Russia would be preponderant (which is notoriously not the case), and Germany would not, as it does, count for more than in proportion to its numbers, and the United Kingdom would not have a peculiar position among the others on account of the undeveloped state of its military resources on the one side and the immensity of its wealth and latent strength on the other side ; yet it is obvious that the mere numbers are a most vital element in appreciating the political position of these five powers and the lesser powers around them. Perhaps if statesmen were always wise, and rulers and peoples free from prejudice and passion, the popular knowledge of the figures would be even more serviceable than it is in demonstrating the absolute insanity of offensive war. It is impossible to conceive what object any of these five great powers could gain by the misery and suffering of war with another adequate to repay that misery and suffering. The very magnitude of the wars forbids the possibility of gain.

The past history and future prospects of the balance of power among these nations are also illustrated by a mere consideration of the numbers. We have only to glance at the population of the different states as at the close of the great

wars in 1815, and as they are now, to see that great changes have happened.

	1815.		1880.	
	Population.	Per cent of Total.	Population.	Per cent of Total.
Russia in Europe .	48,000,000	33	80,000,000 <sup>1</sup>	34
Germany <sup>2</sup> . . . .	21,000,000	14 ½	45,000,000	19
Austria-Hungary .	28,000,000	20	38,000,000	16
France . . . . .	29,000,000	20 ½	37,000,000	16
United Kingdom .	17,000,000	12	35,000,000	15
Total . . . . .	143,000,000	100	235,000,000	100

Thus in 1815 a compact France possessed several millions more than the population of Germany, nearly twice that of the United Kingdom, and more than half that of Russia. Austria-Hungary also came near, as it now does, to the French numbers. Now the population of Germany considerably exceeds that of France; that of the United Kingdom is nearly equal, and that of Russia is more than double. These facts correspond very closely with the transfer of military preponderance on the Continent from France to Germany; and with the increasing prominence of Russia, which would probably be much more felt but for the simultaneous

<sup>1</sup> The exact figure by the last census is 84,000,000.

<sup>2</sup> Germany was also much divided in 1815.

growth of Germany. They also explain why it is that the United Kingdom, with an economic and social development resembling that of France in many respects, has fallen less behind in the political race; why its relative position among European powers, though not what it was fifty years ago, is less weakened than that of France has been. Fifty years ago it was the leader among powers which were occupied in restraining France, singly a greater power than any. Now it is about equal in numbers to France, although its whole position is changed by the fact that no power, not even Germany, preponderates to the same extent as France once did.

As regards the future, again, what the figures suggest clearly is a possible rivalry between Russia and Germany, and the further relative decline of Austria and France; the United Kingdom continuing to grow, but occupying from year to year a different place, as its interest in the so-called balance of power becomes less. Our change toward Europe is, however, affected in part by the growth of our relations beyond the seas, which is another of the great facts of population, evident on the surface of the figures, that I shall afterward have to notice.

Of course these changes have had the effect of raising questions of domestic as well as of foreign interest; and here again we are indebted

to statistics mainly for the suggestion of the questions. One of these questions is, in the case of France, What are the causes and probable consequences, socially and economically, as well as in its relations in respect of the balance of power to its neighbors, of the stationariness of the population? This is one of the most remarkable facts, both in itself, and in comparison with the facts of other countries, which population statistics disclose.

#### THE ENCROACHMENT UPON THE RESOURCES.

Another question presented is as to the increase of population in countries like Germany and Russia, and the rapid encroachment there has been on the unused agricultural resources of those countries. As the stationariness of the population in France, however beneficial in some social aspects, is not an unmixed good, because it weakens France in its external political relations, so the increase of population in Germany and Russia, while they still remain mainly agricultural, appears to be attended by some mischiefs. The social condition of the rural population of Germany leaves much to be desired, as we may see from the extensive emigration, and from the difficulty of increasing the national revenue. In Russia, again, the threatened difficulties appear most formidable. Until lately Russia has been largely in the con-

dition of a new country, with vast quantities of land over which a growing agricultural population could spread. Now the European area is more or less filled up ; and unless the vast territory of Siberia can be largely utilized for settlement (which appears doubtful), the pressure of population on the means of subsistence in Russia may soon become very great. The soil may be capable of supporting, with better agriculture, a larger population ; but this is not the point. The kind of agriculture possible in any country is related to the existing capacity of the population, or to such improvements in that capacity as are in progress ; and with the Russian population as it is, there are certainly traces in Russia of an increasing severity in the struggle for existence, which may at any moment become most serious. The change in the conditions of expansion for the population internally, as compared with what they were fifty years ago, ought at any rate to be recognized at the present day, suggested as they are by the most obvious statistics of Russian population. Italy, it may also be noticed, is fast increasing its population, without any increase of new soil or corresponding increase of manufactures.

#### EUROPE MUST BE FED FROM ABROAD.

Last of all, another fact presented by these obvious figures is the dependence of the popula-

tion of the United Kingdom very largely, and to a less degree of France, Germany, Belgium, and Holland, on the importations of food from abroad. The facts as to the United Kingdom have been much discussed in all their bearings lately, — Mr. Bourne, as we know well, having taken a large part in the discussions; but you have only to turn to the pages of the “Statistical Abstract for Foreign Countries,” to perceive that the United Kingdom is not quite isolated in the matter. It is much more dependent in degree than any other European country, but in the fact of dependence it is not altogether singular. The fact is, of course, partly due to the increase of population in far greater ratio than the increase of agricultural production; the prediction of Malthus, that the population of England would not be supported on the soil of England if it increased at any thing like the rate in his time, having thus been verified, though not exactly as he anticipated: but it is also partly due, however, to an increase in the consuming power of the same population, and the larger consumption of more expensive kinds of food, requiring larger proportionate areas to produce them. France, with a stationary population, increases its imports of food; and the increased consumption per head among our own population of the quantity of such articles as sugar and tea also suggests

that articles of home agricultural production are now consumed more largely than they were twenty years ago or more by the same numbers. To these two causes combined, then, the increase of population and increase of consuming power per head, coupled with a comparatively stationary agriculture, Europe owes the unique phenomenon of large masses of population supported by imports from foreign and distant countries. The social and political consequences of this new fact must be manifold, and again it is to the common figures of statistics we owe our knowledge of it. This great and striking fact would hardly be known at all if the system of periodic censuses and the system of recording imports and exports had not previously been introduced. Socially and politically, perhaps the phenomenon is not yet sufficiently appreciated; and, as compared with what it will be, it is probably only beginning to be important: but it is one which must before long play an important part in international politics and in the economic life of nations. Both the countries which grow the surplus food, and the countries which receive it, are profoundly concerned.

#### THE STARTLING DECLINE OF IRELAND.

In another way the internal growth of population in different countries of Europe is also

connected with great political changes. In Germany, for instance, it was partly the special growth of the population under the Prussian monarchy which assisted to make United Germany. In Russia, again, the great growth of population outside Poland has, from year to year and decade to decade, dwarfed the Polish difficulty as a bare question of the balance of power in Russia. But we have even a more striking case of political change from the internal changes of population nearer home. Every one must have been struck, during the last few years, by the calmness of the country generally in presence of Irish agitation, and the evident hopelessness of any insurrection arising out of that agitation. When Mr. Parnell and other Irish members were arrested in October, last year, and the Land League suppressed, there was hardly even a fractional fall in consols. Forty, fifty, eighty years ago, things were entirely different; the Irish difficulty being incessantly spoken of as most menacing, which, indeed, it was. The present calmness and the former apprehension are obviously due very much to a mere change in population numbers. Ireland, at the beginning of the century, held about one-third of the population of the United Kingdom; as late as 1840 it still held very nearly one-third: now its population is only one-seventh. Apart from all relative changes



in the wealth of the populations, these changes in numbers make a vast difference in the Irish difficulty. It becomes easier for us, on the one hand, to bear the idea of an alien state like Ireland in our close neighborhood, wholly independent, or possessing home rule like the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands: the power of mischief of such a community is less to be feared by a state of England's greatness than was the power of a separate Ireland fifty or eighty years ago by the England of that time. A separate Ireland then might have been used by France against the very existence of the English empire, and the independence of England itself. Now this would hardly be possible either to France or to any other State. On the other hand, any possible insurrection in Ireland is as nothing to the power of the United Kingdom, compared with what it would have been when Ireland held a third of the whole population. Hence the calmness of recent years in comparison with the agitation of a former period, and which is all the more remarkable because the agitated memories survive, and color a good deal of the thought about the Irish difficulty still. A still more careful examination would show, I think, that the difficulty has diminished in intensity—that it is the alien part of Ireland which has most diminished in numbers, while the loyal part—Ulster—has relatively

increased; but here again I wish to confine myself to patent and obvious figures, the lesson of which has more or less sunk into the popular mind.

It is not difficult to perceive, moreover, that these changes in figures must gradually tell more effectively than they have yet done on the Irish difficulty. In 1832 Ireland was endowed with 105 members, its proportion of the population of the United Kingdom being then one-third. If one-third was then considered to entitle it to 105 members, one-seventh, it is clear, would only give it at the present day about 45. Of these 45, again, one-third would be from Ulster, and almost exclusively among the remaining two-thirds, or 30 in all, if we are to judge from the present appearance, should we find Home Rulers. The parliamentary Home Rule difficulty would thus seem to have largely arisen from the failure to adapt the representation of the country to changes in the population. There is certainly nothing in the increased wealth or vigor of the Irish population, compared with that of the rest of the United Kingdom, to suggest that Ireland should have a larger representation in proportion to its population than it had in 1832; yet if its representation were only to be reduced in proportion, the parliamentary difficulty would largely disappear. Even if no greater change were now to be made than the

introduction of equal electoral districts, and assuming that the present changes in population continue, and that Irish representation is adapted to the probable relative population of Ireland and the United Kingdom at the next census, then the representatives of Ireland in Parliament would be reduced from 105 to 83; and of these 83 only 55 would be sent from those parts of Ireland in which there is disaffection: so that the maximum number of Home Rulers, unless there are great changes of party, which I am not discussing, would apparently be less than 55. Of course I am not discussing the possibility or expediency of any political changes: I am merely pointing out the ideas which the figures on the surface are suggesting for consideration, and which must affect the politics of the next few years.

#### THE IMPENDING STARVATION OF INDIA.

Still continuing the use of the most common statistics of population, I propose next to direct attention to one of the most formidable problems which have to be dealt with by our Imperial Government, and for the knowledge of which we are mainly indebted to statistics. I refer to the growth of the population of our great dependency, — India. I have already referred, in the most general terms, to the peculiar and complicated relations which are likely to grow up

between nations of the European family and the races or nations of different types. At no point are these relations more interesting than they are in connection with the supremacy the English race has gained over the subject races of India. The point of interest in these relations for our present purpose lies, however, chiefly in this, — that the Roman peace we have established in India appears to be effective in removing many obstacles to the growth of population which formerly existed, — what Malthus described as the natural checks: so that under our rule the Indian population is growing in numbers from year to year, and trenching with alarming rapidity on the means of subsistence. I believe I am within the mark in saying that there is no more anxious subject for the consideration of our public men. The late Mr. Bagehot, I know, was profoundly impressed by the fact; and others of our leading public men and economists are also deeply impressed by it, though it is considered almost too delicate for public discussion. There can be no doubt, however, of the formidable nature of the problem. India has now on its 1,400,000 square miles of territory a population of 240,000,000, — I am dealing in round figures, — or about 170 to the square mile; not an excessive proportion, according to formal comparisons with other countries, but in reality leaving the people no margin.

It appears, from the most careful studies, that, whatever the number of people to the square mile, there is very little new and fertile soil to appropriate ; that much soil has been so appropriated during the last century of our rule ; and that the population continues to grow fast without any increase of the land revenue, or any other sign that land is being rapidly taken into cultivation, — with signs, on the contrary, of exhaustion in the agriculture, and of an approach to the limits of production according to the means at the disposal of the population. So much is more or less accurately known by statistics ; and of the cardinal fact — the magnitude and increase of the population — it is statistics from which we learn every thing. The broad figures are here not so clear as they might be, because improved methods in taking the censuses have from time to time revealed larger populations than could be accounted for by taking the totals of one previous census and adding the probable or possible increase of population meanwhile ; but of the actual fact of increase between two census periods there is no doubt, while the rate of increase, if we are successful in coping with famines, proves to be nearly one per cent per annum. In ten years, therefore, there will be 20,000,000 more people in India to feed ; in twenty years, upward of 40,000,000 more ; and the problem thus brought

before the Indian Government is, in what way and by what means so to develop the character of the people that their industry may become more efficient upon practically the same soil. Failing any speedy alteration in the character of the people, the prospect seems inevitably to be, that in India, from decade to decade, larger and larger masses of the semi-pauperized or wholly pauperized, the landless classes as Sir James Caird calls them in the Famine Commission Report, will grow up, requiring state subventions to feed them, and threatening all attempts to reform Indian finance, while raising social and political difficulties of the most dangerous kind. It seems certain, then, that India for many years to come will be an increasingly dangerous problem for our statesmen to deal with ; the more dangerous, perhaps, because any change in the character of the people, bringing with it increased energy of production and increased strength of character altogether, will also bring with it a rise in the scale of living, tending to make the masses discontented instead of submissive to their lot. Whatever course events may take, our rule in India must apparently for generations become a problem of increasing difficulty and complexity. The problem is analogous to what seems to lie before a government like that of Russia ; with this difference, that the government is in Russia a native

institution, whereas in India it is an alien nation governing a host of subject races.

I shall be told, perhaps, that, if statistics suggest problems like this, they are only making us uncomfortable before the time: the evils apprehended are purely speculative. But in the case of India this cannot be said. The actual creation of a famine-fund is a proof that the evil is imminent. The fund is created in order to secure that large numbers of people are kept alive in times of famine, millions being in this way semi-pauperized. The prospect is, that before long there may be millions to be kept alive in non-famine and famine years alike, people without land or means of living, and without the possibility of being employed as laborers. Thus the difference between the present condition of things and what seems imminent, unless, as I have stated, there is an unlooked-for change in the character of the people, is one not of kind but of degree. The statistics only bring to light and set out an immediate difficulty. The solution at present devised, of a famine-fund by which millions of the Indian people are virtually pauperized, is certainly not one to be contemplated with any satisfaction. It may be unavoidable; but, from the point of view of civilization and progress, it is little more than a confession of the hopelessness of the difficulty.

## EIGHT HUNDRED MILLIONS OF AMERICANS.

The last broad fact I shall refer to as presented and made familiar to us by these statistics of population, is that of the growth of population in the United States, — a subject, perhaps, of even greater interest than any I have yet referred to, and involved as it is in fact with one or two interesting questions already glanced at; viz., the existence and increase of large European populations which are supported by imports of food from new countries, and mainly from the United States.

The broad fact presented by the United States is that of the doubling of the population in periods of about twenty-five years. There is a little doubt about the exact population at the time of the War of Independence, and down to the first census at the beginning of the present century; but for the present purpose the figures we get are good enough:—

1780 . . . .	3,000,000	1840 . . . .	17,100,000
1790 . . . .	3,000,000	1850 . . . .	23,200,000
1800 . . . .	5,300,000	1860 . . . .	31,400,000
1810 . . . .	7,200,000	1870 . . . .	38,500,000
1820 . . . .	9,600,000	1880 . . . .	50,100,000
1830 . . . .	12,900,000		

In other words, the population of the United States has multiplied itself by 16 in the course of the century; this being the result of its doubling itself every twenty-five years for that

period. In another twenty-five years, at the same rate of increase, the population would be 100,000,000, in fifty years 200,000,000, in seventy-five years 400,000,000, and at the end of a century 800,000,000! Such is the first aspect of the broad fact presented to our consideration by the increase of population in the United States. The rate is such as to be fairly bewildering in its probable consequences. The phenomenon is also without a precedent in history. There has been no such increase of population anywhere on a similar scale, and, above all, no such increase of a highly civilized and richly fed population. The increase is not only unprecedented in mere numbers, but it is an increase of the most expensively living population that has ever been in the world. For the idea of such an increase we are indebted exclusively to statistics. The United States, among the other new ideas of old civilizations they have had the benefit of, have had the idea of a periodical census, which is even made a part of their Constitution; and as the result we have before us — not only in a general way, but with some precision, so that discussion may have an assured basis — this phenomenon of an unprecedented increase of population, which is, perhaps, the greatest political and economic fact of the age.

The fact has altered, in the first place, the

whole idea of the balance of power of the European nations. A century ago the European nations, in their political relations, thought little but of each other. Now the idea of a new Europe on the other side of the Atlantic affects every speculation, however much the new people keep themselves aloof from European politics. The horizon has been enlarged, as it were; and the mere fact of the United States dwarfs, and I think restrains, the rivalries at home. European governments can no longer have the notion that they are playing the first part on the stage of the world's political history. And this sense of being dwarfed will probably increase in time. In this country, at any rate, we cannot but feel greatly attracted by the United States. Because of the magnitude of that country, the European continent is less to us: our relations are elsewhere.

It is in connection, however, with our own home problems of population, that the increase of the United States is most interesting to us. The increase is partly at our expense, and at that of the other European nations. If the United States, or some other new country, had not received our emigrants, it is quite clear that our whole history would have been different from what it is. We should either have had in our midst the people who emigrated, and their descendants, straining the resources of our soil,

and mines, and capital, or the pressure upon these resources would have checked in various ways the growth of the population itself, so that probably, at this moment, but for the new countries, more people would now be living in the United Kingdom than there are, and larger numbers of the population would be paupers, or on the verge of pauperism. The actual numbers we have lost altogether, and specially to the United States, have been :—

	To United States.	Altogether.
Before 1820 . . . . .	50,000	123,000
1820-30 . . . . .	100,000	247,000
1830-40 . . . . .	308,000	703,000
1840-50 . . . . .	1,094,000	1,684,000
1851-52 . . . . .	511,000	704,000
1853-60 . . . . .	805,000	1,312,000
1860-70 . . . . .	1,132,000	1,571,000
1870-80 . . . . .	1,087,000	1,678,000
Total . . . . .	5,087,000	8,022,000

Some correction of these figures would be necessary, — in the earlier years for foreigners included, and in the later years for persons returning home; but the correction in the present view would make no material difference. If these people had not emigrated, and had increased as the rest of the population has done at home, the existing population in the United

Kingdom would now be many millions more than it is. The difference made by the emigration to the United States alone must be a good many millions.

#### THE FOOD SENT OUT OF THE UNITED STATES.

The influence of the United States and other new countries has been greater still. On a rough calculation, about 12,000,000 at least of the people of the United Kingdom live on imported food; and a certain part of the population of Germany, France, Belgium, and Holland also live on imported food,—the importations being mainly from the United States. These new countries, therefore, not only have permitted an increase of population in a century, till it is sixteen times the population at starting, but a much larger increase. To take the United States alone, we cannot estimate its contribution to the support of foreign populations at less than an amount equal to the support of a population of 10,000,000, similar in character to that of the United Kingdom. Its exports of breadstuffs and provisions are now about £90,000,000 annually, at the value as they leave the United States; and at £9 per head, corresponding approximately to a value in the United Kingdom of £11 per head,—which is about our consumption of agricultural products per head,—this would be equal to the support

of 10,000,000 persons. In other words, then, the United States, from supporting 3,000,000 of people a century ago, are now supporting at least 60,000,000, — virtually an increase of twenty times the original number. The growth of population thus becomes more astonishing than ever. Altogether there must be about 15,000,000 of people in Europe supported by the produce of the new countries; and adding together the populations of Canada, Australia, and the United States, to this 15,000,000, less a deduction for the population in these countries a century ago, there remains a total of about 70,000,000 of European population, or nearly one-fourth of the population now living in Europe, which is supported by the produce of newly opened regions. To make these figures quite exact, a correction ought to be made on account of the non-European element in the population of the United States; the colored population in 1880 being 6,500,000. The colored population in the United States, however, is brought into competition with the European, and in some degree Europeanized. The history of Europe, we may well say, would have been entirely different from what it has been during the last century, but for the new countries. It is difficult, indeed, to over-estimate the extent to which the existence of a new field for population, such as the United States pre-

sents, has dominated the recent economic history of Europe. We are so accustomed to a set of economic circumstances in which population, constantly increasing in numbers and in the capacity for food consumption per head, finds practically unlimited means of expansion, that we can hardly understand economists like Malthus, who were oppressed by the only too-evident limits which nature, at the time he wrote, had apparently set.

It seems impossible, however, not to see that a period in which the pressure of limits to growth and expansion may again be felt is not far off. The approach of such a period seems to me to be suggested by the figures which are on the surface ; and I may perhaps be permitted to anticipate, that the idea of such an approach, if it is not now, will soon become, a familiar subject for speculation.

#### DISMAL PROSPECT FOR US.

The very language in which reference has been made to the increase of population in the United States itself — viz., that the present rate of increase implies twenty-five years hence a population of 100,000,000, a hundred years hence a population of 800,000,000 — indicates that a continuance of this rate of increase may be considered incredible. It implies future changes in the industrial power of the race

which we have no warrant to anticipate. The area of the United States, exclusive of Alaska, which does not count, is 3,000,000 square miles; and of this area there are at least 1,000,000 square miles, if not more, which are sterile or rainless, so that cultivation, so far as we can now foresee, is out of the question. There remain, then, 2,000,000 square miles; and on this area a population of 800,000,000 would give 400 to the square mile, — one-third as much again as the present population per square mile in the United Kingdom, twice as much per square mile as the population of the United Kingdom which is supported by the home agriculture, and more than twice as much per square mile as the present population of France. Allowing for the greater consuming power of people in the United States, as compared with that of the French people, this is as much as to say that a rate of increase of population like what has been going on in the United States for a century is impossible in the next century, unless the power of the human race to extract food from the soil is enormously increased. No doubt the United States may lose in each decade that special force of addition to its rate of increase due to immigration. As its own population increases, the proportion of the area from which immigrants are drawn will diminish; and hence there is apparent reason to antici-

pate that the proportion of the immigration itself will diminish: but at present there is hardly a sign of change in the proportion of the immigration; and, for some time to come at least, no material difference seems likely from this cause in the rate of increase of the United-States population. The increase of population between 1870 and 1880 was almost at as great a rate as any that has occurred. Besides, it does not follow that the diminution of the area from which immigrants are drawn should diminish the immigration itself. Other things being equal, a larger and larger share of the increasing population of older countries will emigrate; and, if they do not emigrate, they will have to be supported by the import of food from new countries, which comes to the same thing. Moreover, a much smaller increase in the United States than we have supposed, say to 400,000,000 in a century, would presuppose practically so violent a change in existing conditions that the difference between it and the more violent change which an increase of population to the larger figure would require need not be considered.

#### VERY GREAT CHANGES IN VIEW.

The bare statement of such figures appears to me quite enough to indicate that the present economic circumstances of the European family

of nations, including the United States as an offshoot and part of the family, are not likely to continue for more than a generation or two. We are within measurable distance of very great changes. No doubt there are other new lands — in Australia, in Canada, at the Cape, and elsewhere — which will be more or less available in the future ; but, singly, the United States is so much the larger field, that the influence of these other new lands need not be considered. Assuming the United States to possess only half the area of new country available for the European races, a single doubling of the population, after the United States has been filled up — the work of a generation or two — would absorb all these other new lands : their existence only postpones the date when they will all be in the position calculated for America alone at the end of a century, by thirty years or so. In the course of a century, then, we may affirm that the present economic circumstances of the European races which make possible an indefinite expansion of the numbers of the people, coupled with an increase of their consuming power, will have entirely changed.

The facts appear to me so interesting that I ask leave to add something more ; though the figures I have now to give you, while easily accessible, are not quite so much on the surface, and have not been popularized. These

figures relate to the actual appropriation of land for settlement, and the actual growth of population in the new and old States respectively. What I wish to bring out is, that a much larger portion of the available area of the United States has been "taken for settlement" than is commonly imagined; that, in fact, not only the thirteen original States and their three subsections have been so taken for settlement, but what are known as the Western States, exclusive of the Pacific Territories, have also been taken for settlement; that the growth of rural population in this second group of States has now brought them nearly to the level of the rural population in the older States; that there is no longer much room for growth by taking up new lands in all these portions of the States; that the remaining available area is so small as to render inevitable its being taken for settlement before very long; and that from this point, probably within twenty or thirty years, the new economic circumstances I have been referring to must make themselves felt.

The total area of the United States, according to the last census, exclusive of Alaska, is given as 3,025,600 square miles, of which there is a land surface of 2,970,000 square miles. Of this the portion belonging to each of the three groups named, with the quantities of each, respectively, taken for settlement, is as follows;

the figures being worked out from the data of area and population as given by the last census:—

AREA OF UNITED STATES, AND AREA TAKEN FOR SETTLEMENT, IN THREE GROUPS.

	Total Area.	Area taken for Settlement.
GROUP I.	Square Miles.	Square Miles.
Thirteen to sixteen original States . .	393,000	362,000
GROUP II.		
Twelve Western and Southern States <sup>1</sup> .	605,000	560,000
GROUP III.		
Remaining States and Territories:—		
<i>a.</i> Six Far West States <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	620,000	376,000
<i>b.</i> Pacific States and Territories <sup>3</sup> .	1,407,000	277,000
Total . . . . .	2,027,000	647,000
Grand total . . . . .	3,025,000	1,569,000

Thus, out of the total area of 3,000,000 odd square miles, rather more than one-half is the area taken for settlement; and the area not

<sup>1</sup> Viz., Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida.

<sup>2</sup> Viz., Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Kansas, Nebraska, and Texas.

<sup>3</sup> Viz., California, Oregon, Dakota, Colorado, Nevada, Arizona, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, New Mexico, and Washington.

for settlement is almost exclusively in the last group of all. This group I have subdivided into two sections, — the first comprising States like Iowa and Minnesota, more or less completely settled, and the second comprising the Pacific States and Territories; and of the first subsection, it will be observed, more than half is already included in the area taken for settlement. The question then arises, How much of the unsettled portion is available for settlement? and to this the answer must be, Little. When I mention that Mr. Porter, the well-known American statistician, and one of the Tariff Commission, in his book on "The West" estimates that there are 1,400,000 square miles of territory in the West, of which only a tithe will ever be available for cultivation, it will be seen that the wholly unoccupied portion of the available territory must now be reduced to very small dimensions.

The next point to which I draw attention is the actual population of the first two groups, exclusive of the town population, and the proportion to the square mile. This figure I work out from the tables at pp. 26–31 of the Introduction to the Population Statistics of the United-States Census.

NET RURAL POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES, EXCLUSIVE OF THE TOWN POPULATION, IN DIFFERENT GROUPS OF STATES, WITH THE NUMBERS PER SQUARE MILE.

	Total Population.	Town Population.	Net Rural Population.	No. per Square Mile of Rural Population.
Group I. . . .	21,835,111	7,939,334	13,895,777	35
Group II. . . .	19,656,666	3,614,835	16,041,831	26½
Group III. <i>a</i> . . .	6,761,132	847,282	5,913,850	9½
Group III. <i>b</i> . . .	1,902,874	534,659	1,368,215	1
Total of III.	8,664,006	1,381,941	7,282,065	—
Grand total . .	50,155,783	12,936,110	37,219,673	12

Thus, while the rural population in the thirteen original States is 35 per square mile, it amounts to no less than 26½ per square mile in twelve other States which we are accustomed to speak of as more or less unoccupied. This is clearly not the case. An addition of 8½ per square mile, or of little more than 5,000,000 in all, would make them as populous as the rural parts of the original States. Group III.*a*, though it has a larger area to fill up, would nevertheless become as populous per square mile rurally as the older group of States by an addition of about 15,000,000 of population. It appears, however, that a large part of this area belongs to the rainless region; so that probably less than two-thirds of this 15,000,000 would fill up

the available area to the limit of the thirteen original States. There remains only the last division of all; but it would seem that the available area here cannot be put at more than 400,000 square miles, on which the present rural population would be about three per square mile; so that, if the population grows to the limit of the older States, the addition to the population necessary would be about 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 only. Altogether an addition of about 20,000,000 to 25,000,000 to the rural population of the United States<sup>1</sup> would seem all that is required to occupy the available area in the same way that the oldest and most settled part is now occupied. When that point is reached, the present conditions of expansion must begin to change.

How long will it be till the point is reached? Some idea of this may be formed from a comparison of the increase of the total population with the increase of the city population. This is shown in a table at p. 29 of the Introduction to the Population Statistics of the Census, already referred to; from which it appears that the total population increased nearly 12,000,000 in the last census period, and the urban population nearly 3,500,000; so that the rural population increased 8,500,000. Of course it may be urged that the rural population may have in-

<sup>1</sup> Viz., 5,000,000 to second group, 10,000,000 to group III. *a*, and 10,000,000 to group III. *b*.

creased in the older parts of the country as well as in the new; but it is interesting to observe how much of the absolute increase of population is in the second and third groups, and not in the first.

Thus, in the last decade about 4,000,000 of the total increase of population is in the second group, and 3,700,000 in the last group. At this rate, clearly, the increase of population in the second group in ten years from 1880, if all agricultural, would be such as nearly to fill up the country with a rural population to the level of the older States, while the same increase would go a very long way toward filling up the last group in the same way. But the speed with which the vacuum will be filled will probably be even greater. The population in the new regions grows at an increasing rate as regards amounts. In 1840 the population in the third group was about 74,000 only; in 1850 it had increased by rather more than 800,000; by 1868 there had been a further increase of 2,000,000; by 1870 there had been another addition of 2,000,000; and between 1870 and 1880 there is an addition of nearly 4,000,000. Thus, in only one decennial period, viz., between 1860 and 1870, is the increase less than about double what it had been in the previous decennial period. The increase of population in this new region at the past rate would therefore be, not 4,000,000,

but 8,000,000, or about half what is required to fill up the region with a rural population to the level of the thirteen original States. In 1890, therefore, not only will the second group of States very probably be filled up to the level of the thirteen original States, but the work of filling up the last group of all will have advanced very nearly toward completion. In another ten years, that is, by 1900, assuming the same progressive rate of increase, the addition to the population in the last group of all would be 16,000,000, which would be far more than sufficient to fill up the vacuum.

#### TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AHEAD.

There is still another way of looking at the matter. During the decennial period 1870-80, the increase of population in the United States was about equally distributed between the three groups, — about 4,000,000 to each ; the increase in the first group being, however, mainly in the cities. Assuming an equal division of the 50,000,000 additional population which will be on the territory of the United States in twenty-five years (and it is more likely that the Western States will have a larger proportionate share), this would give 16,000,000 more to the second group, or 11,000,000 more than is necessary to fill up the rural districts to the level of the Eastern States ; and 16,000,000 to the third group,

which would suffice to fill the rural districts to the Eastern level. Even looking at the matter in this way, then, the prospect is, that the available area in the United States will be peopled up to the level of the thirteen original States, as regards the rural population, in the course of twenty-five years. But the distribution of the increase between the groups, as I have said, is likely to be unequal; and the West will probably be filled up with even greater rapidity. To look at the matter in yet another aspect: Of the 50,000,000 additional population, — assuming an increase of the town population like what has been going on in the past, — about 12,000,000 will be a town population, leaving 38,000,000 as the rural increase. But unless rural population is to increase in the original States, and is also to increase in the second group to more than the present level of the original States, the whole of this 38,000,000 (except the 5,000,000 required for the growth of rural population in the second group to the level of the original States) will be left for the occupation of the available area in the third group, — or double what is required. Whatever way we look at the matter, then, it seems certain that in twenty-five years' time, and probably before that date, the limitation of area in the United States will be felt. There will be no longer vast tracts of virgin land for the settler. The

whole available area will be peopled agriculturally as the Eastern States are now peopled.

All this must involve a great change in the conditions of the growth of population and the general economic conditions of the country. It confirms in the most ample manner what was to be surmised from the bare statement of the geometric increase of population itself, pointing as it did to a population of 800,000,000 at the end of a century from this time. Long before that, it is plain, and I think quite certainly within twenty-five years, the conditions of the expansion of population must be substantially different from what they are now.

#### THE NARROW LIMITS OF EXPANSION.

It will be urged that it is notorious that the United States can support enormous masses of population. Its available agricultural area in round figures is twelve or thirteen times that of the United Kingdom, and eight times that of France. Considering what the population of the United Kingdom or that of France is, and the superior fertility of many tracts of the United States, it appears safe enough to assume that the United States can support an indefinite increase of population, and that there is room for great expansion of population within the settled area. But, assuming all this to be the case, what we may observe is, that it is not quite to

the present point. This is not a question of supporting a large population anyhow: how they are to be supported, is here all-important. The moment there is little new land to occupy, the conditions of expansion must change: every year must bring nearer the date when the fruits of the soil will be extracted with increasing difficulty. The agriculture must become different from what it is now. What has been already said, moreover, as to the United Kingdom and France not supporting all their own population, and as to what the position in the United States would be, even as compared with the United Kingdom and France, if the geometric increase in the United States should continue no more than a century, may show that there is, after all, no room for an indefinite expansion of population within the settled area in the United States. I should like to go farther, and suggest that the limits of such expansion, without a very great and almost inconceivable change in the agriculture itself, must be very narrow. Comparisons with European states on this head seem very apt to mislead. But the figure of thirty-five per square mile as the rural population of the older parts of the United States is, after all, one-fourth of the agricultural population of France per square mile. And there are two important differences between the agriculture of France and the United States:

1. The consuming power of the United-States population is much greater, perhaps double that of the French population, so that the soil cannot be expected to support the same number of Americans as French; 2. The Western farmer in the United States grows for export, not merely to the towns of the country, but abroad. A rural population one-fourth that of France may thus be quite sufficient to settle up the country. We must not come to the subject with European ideas as to the scale of living.

#### ECONOMIC CONDITIONS FUNDAMENTALLY ALTERED.

It would be foreign to my purpose to indulge in speculation as to what will be the consequences of this approach to a complete settlement of the United States, coupled with the fact that population, whether in the United Kingdom, or in Germany, or in the United States, shows no signs of abatement in the rate of increase. It is sufficient for my purpose to point out, that as the existence of vast tracts of virgin soil in the United States has permitted, during the last hundred years, an expansion of the European population without a precedent in history, has made the economic history of Europe in that period entirely different from what it would otherwise have been, so now the approach to a complete settlement must profound-

ly affect the world. The conditions of economic growth will be fundamentally altered. Possibly there may be chemical or other inventions rendering possible great improvements in agriculture, which will have practically the same effect as an increase of the quantity of new land available. Possibly we may have the rate of growth of population itself checked. But with the change of one condition others must change if the masses of European people are to remain at their present level of prosperity. If there is no change, the nature of the difficulties that will arise is obvious: the masses of laborers will have to contend, under increasing difficulties, against a fall in the scale of living.

But while I refrain from indulging in general speculation, I may, perhaps, be allowed to point out some of the more immediate consequences which are likely to follow from an approach to complete settlement in the United States, of which we seem to be within a measurable distance. First of all, there will probably be a diversion of a large part of the stream of emigration from Europe and the Eastern States of the American Union, to the north-west provinces of Canada. Here there are probably about 400,000 square miles of territory available for settlement, equal in quality to the best land in the United States West. As there is no such field in the United States itself, the stream must ap-

parently be to the new land. The second immediate consequence I should look for would be an increase of manufactures and of town population in the United States. The agricultural outlet becoming less tempting, and agricultural wages tending to fall, the population will inevitably be more and more largely drawn into manufacturing. And a third consequence will probably be a check to the tide of emigration from older countries, a greater demand upon the agriculture of those countries, or at least a mitigation of the extreme competition it now sustains from virgin soils, and possibly a reversal of the present tendency for rents to fall. Such changes may hardly be apparent for a few years, with the exception, perhaps, of the diversion of the stream of emigration to the north-west of Canada, which has begun ; but it seems hardly possible to doubt that they must begin to be felt before very long, — perhaps in the course of ten, and almost certainly in the course of twenty, years.

To sum up this long review : These easy figures of population evidently go to the heart of much of our politics and political economy. To quote only the illustrations I have given, we may say, first, they give some idea of the mass of the European population in the world, and consequently of the overwhelming strength of European civilization. Next, as we have seen,

they help to explain the existence of five leading powers in Europe, and the changes in the balance of power which have occurred in the last fifty or sixty years. They equally help to explain domestic changes in each country, such as the diminished intensity of the Irish difficulty in the United Kingdom, or the growth of social difficulties in a country like Russia, through the population increasing, with no other opening but a restricted agriculture; or such external difficulties as we have brought on ourselves by the conquest of India, and the Roman peace we have established. Finally they set before us, in a clear light, the great economic phenomenon of our time,—the creation of the United States of America, and the provision by this and similar agencies for a growth of population, not only in the United States, but in Europe, which is entirely without precedent. I have endeavored to supplement the last figures with a few others designed to throw light on the question of the continuance of this portentous growth, and the probability of a check to it; but the figures here used are also easily accessible. Familiar as are some of the things we have been discussing, it is often too evident that they are not sufficiently appreciated; that hazy ideas are widely held, which a clear knowledge of statistics would disperse.

# EUROPE IN STRAITS:

COMMERCE AND WAR.

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WE lately called attention to the "omens of trouble" manifest in the remarkable change which, increasing year by year, has come over the nations of Europe, whereby the panoply of war has succeeded to, and displaced, the almost Quaker-like habits of peace which prevailed at the middle period of the century. We showed how every country in this respect has fared alike, and that nowhere is the war-change more conspicuous than in our own pre-eminently peace-loving isles of industry and shopkeeping. And we asked, Whence and whither? How is it that this extraordinary change has supervened? and what does it forebode? Are the nations of a whole continent gone mad? Or is there really some great war "in the air," which human instinct scents from afar, and whole peoples are almost unconsciously preparing for? hardly any one thinking of creating a war, but each careful to see that its weapons of defence lie ready at hand.

In considering whither Europe is drifting, we certainly shall not assume to don the prophet's mantle, but simply desire to place before our readers some of the peculiar aspects of the times, out of which the future is likely to shape itself; the present being ever to the future what the child is to the man. Now, Europe at present exhibits a very peculiar aspect indeed, — one which, from the beginning of time, it has never presented before; and also one which, once established, *must go on* unless our whole present order of things, society and civilization, are to come, be it suddenly or slowly, to an end, — whether by some vast catastrophe of war and revolution, or by the gradual wasting of declining energy and decay.

In one respect, no doubt, this aspect or general condition of Europe (our own isles included) is of itself a happy result of recently acquired powers, — of powers but for which a great European crisis must have already have been undergone, and our continent would ere now have been distinctly on the wane; not at all mysteriously, but as a result seemingly as certain as that of human existence itself. In a recently published work,<sup>1</sup> a thoughtful writer has traced the uprise and progress of "internationalism," — of the various facts and causes which after the peace of Waterloo, and as a pressing neces-

<sup>1</sup> The New Golden Age, by R. H. Patterson.

gity, began to widen the sphere of individual and national enterprise, alike in commerce and finance; and the final outburst of European enterprise and capital all over the world, which came with the advent of railways and oceanic steam-navigation, making Europe as truly the heart and headquarters of the civilized globe as Italy was of the Mediterranean world under the sway of Rome.

But for these and other co-operating causes, it is an unquestionable fact, that ere this the European continent, and England first, would have reached its limits of general greatness. There must either have been a full stop in the growth of population, or else, as natural passion never yet took such warning in time, Europe would have been landed in a crisis — a wider and direr 1848 — produced by starving poverty in evil conjunction with the “dangerous classes” which exist largely in even the most fortunate countries. For years past, our own people have become dependent for one-half of their food, and also of their employment, upon foreign countries. It is beyond our present purpose to speculate whether the cataclysm above referred to is not being approached anew, despite the immense advantages which in recent times have been placed at the disposal of civilized mankind. But, speaking solely of existing circumstances, we desire to call attention to the

condition in which our continent now stands, and the natural influence which such a position exerts upon national life and interests, — an influence which is distinctly visible in the policy of European states, whether they be kingdoms or republics; and which, as it grows, must more and more affect the *haute politique* of Europe and the imperial fortunes of all the leading nations of the Old World.

Let us observe some of the obvious facts and warning lessons of the times. In all directions human power has widened vastly within the last half-century; and, whether in peace or in war, combinations of states and peoples now possess a potentiality of magnitude previously undreamt of. Moreover, strange and startling — possibly even unnatural — as it may seem, the very civilization of Europe has engendered wants, which, however unconsciously, are prone to create within the bosom of peace the circumstances of war. Every country in Europe — even Russia — has become too small for its people; not a few of them are actually inadequate for the sustenance of their inhabitants, — the domestic food-supply is insufficient, and all of them too small of themselves to supply their people with the scale of comfortable existence, which, in many respects happily, has become a common or well-nigh universal expectation. The nations of Europe have entirely

ceased to be self-sufficing. They desire and demand foreign trade; new markets for their ever-increasing industry,—for the product of that ever-growing work of manufacture which is the only expansible employment for a population which has become too numerous for its soil. Nay, more: beyond foreign trade, not a few of our nations imperiously desire foreign settlements. Besides the knowledge that “commerce follows the flag,” and that the surest basis of a foreign trade is colonies and dependencies,—a dependent empire,—in some cases there is a desire, born of an actual want, for “fresh fields and pastures new,” to provide new homes for their ever-growing numbers. In truth, even Russia, with her vast forests and thinly peopled steppes, desires new territory for agricultural settlement, for a population which has little taste and equally small opportunity for manufacturing industry.

This view of the case, this new aspect of the European continent, has not yet been adequately conceived. We are all more or less alive to the fact that our own islands are, and in reality have long been, insufficient for their inhabitants. First, about the beginning of the present century, a portion of our people became dependent for employment upon other countries. Our stores of coal and iron, together with the then recent inventions in textile machinery, had

begun to furnish a new source of employment alike for capital and labor, provided other countries supplied us with a portion of the raw materials, and with markets for the manufactured articles. And these things we had obtained, almost without noticing the fact. Thanks to the sagacity of Pitt, we had acquired a splendid colonial empire, simply, as it were, in the course of waging the great war against France and her allies. And thus, as both our wealth and our population augmented beyond the limits of investment and of employment within the area and upon the resources of our own little islands, we launched forth under the most favorable conditions upon that career of internationalism, alike in commerce and finance, by means of which both our population and our wealth have acquired unparalleled proportions relative to the size and natural resources of our country. Indeed, so vast have our national requirements now become, that despite our magnificent and far-spreading empire, — a marvel of the world! — we have at length reached a stage at which we are critically dependent upon foreign tariffs and commercial treaties with the world at large. In a proud self-reliance (whether wisely or not), we cut ourselves adrift from Pitt's grand scheme of a British *Zollverein*: we preferred not to rely upon the smaller but safe world of trade between a mother-country and its dependencies,

and to aim at and trust to a manufacturing and commercial supremacy in the world at large. To obtain this, we had to abandon the "differential duties," — the commercial league with our colonies. And now we have manifestly reached a critical stage, when that commercial supremacy is becoming endangered, partly by a growing rivalry of other nations in manufacturing industry, and partly from the operation of their hostile tariffs. Certainly we do not despair of our commercial fortunes; but that our position is becoming critical, must be recognized by every one who adequately considers the enormous extent, hitherto unparalleled in the world, to which the fortunes of our people have become dependent, not merely upon the integrity of our vast empire, but upon our relations with that vaster outer world, between which and ourselves there exists no relationship save that of a self-interest which is as often rival as mutual.

We refer to this matter, not for discussion, but in illustration, or for instructive comparison. What we desire to call attention to is, that these conditions of national existence, which, since the beginning of the century, have become so imperative in our own country, are gradually becoming imposed upon the other states of Europe,<sup>1</sup> and are already most per-

<sup>1</sup> The flight of population from Europe is at present greater than ever, the immigration into the United States alone amount-

ceptibly affecting their imperial policy. The grand toast of our fathers, "Ships, colonies, and commerce," is in one form or other becoming a fixed object of policy with nearly all the states of the Continent. It is a necessity for them. Germany, it is true, which for a while contemplated an oceanic extension of her empire (chiefly by making settlements in the Pacific Archipelago), still refrains from such a diffusion of her power and population; temporarily submitting to the growing discontent of the latter, rather than lose the services of her soldier-sons until the period of war-crisis at home has ceased or been victoriously surmounted. But France, Italy, Spain, Russia: is it not to foreign extension, territorial aggrandizement with commercial influence, that the imperial policy of each of these states is directed? For this object, France sacrifices even

ing to three-quarters of a million annually. The "Daily News" correspondent at New York states that the immigration for the past year (1882) "was the largest in the history of the country. The grand total will be about 735,000, against 719,000 last year. This estimate is based on the official government figures for all the months except December. The different nationalities are divided as follows: England and Wales, 81,000; Ireland, 70,000; Scotland, 17,000; Germany, 232,000; Sweden, 59,000; Norway, 27,000; Canada, 89,000; all other countries, 160,000. Germany maintains the lead, sending nearly a third of the entire number. The quality of the arrivals has been good; the vast majority of them going West, and becoming producers and useful citizens almost immediately."

the high idea of a Latin Confederation, whereby alone South-western Europe could make itself a match for the now unified central states, or rise to a level of power with the Muscovite colossus. France has quarrelled with Italy for the sake of appropriating Tunis, and snarls at England for the sake of Egypt. In turn, Spain watches France with jealous and half-angry eyes, because suspecting that Gallic ambition would fain seek new fields in Morocco, which the Spaniards have marked out for their own spoil. Balked in Tunis by the prompter and more daring policy of France, Italy still throws a covetous glance southward to the African seaboard, hoping to anticipate France in Tripoli; and while looking now almost hopelessly at the "Italian" valleys of the Tyrol, the Italian government watches with feverish anxiety the eastern coast of the Adriatic, where the martial hand of the Turk is losing its hold upon that region of wild mountain tribes. According to a newly issued report upon the crown-lands in Italy, upwards of sixty thousand small proprietors have been dispossessed—in our phrase, "evicted"—on account of inability to pay the taxes; a state of matters which seems to rival the crushing poverty of the rural districts of Italy under the later Roman emperors. Several deputies, in consequence, have prayed the minister of finance to bring forward the bill

for the abolition of the *quote minime* of the property tax.<sup>1</sup>

Further, and more formidable of all, there is the mingled commercial and territorial ambition — the combined land-and-trade hunger — both of Austria and Russia in Northern Turkey and the valley of the Danube. Apart from the momentous objects of political power and racial ascendancy, which so visibly centre in South-eastern Europe, the line of the Danube is indispensable to the Germanic States as a commercial highway and outlet; while, in the lack of transmarine settlements, it is in the fertile alluvial plains of the Lower Danube that the Germans must seek an emigration-field for their steadily

<sup>1</sup> Italy is certainly not one of the most densely peopled portions of Europe; yet, at the end of last year, the British consul at Naples reports "that the tide of emigration to both North and South America, from the Italian provinces of the interior, is assuming quite alarming proportions. The poverty and misery endured by the Italian peasantry have been shown of late, in many authoritative publications, to be almost without parallel; and it appears that their helpless and apparently hopeless condition has begun to have its natural effect in stimulating the desire to try their fortunes in other lands. The number embarked on board British vessels in the port of Naples, during the first three months of the present year, equalled the total for the previous twelve months. The emigrants belong almost entirely to the peasant class; and it is not unusual, we are told, for the inhabitants of an entire village to sell off their small properties, and take passage in these emigrant-ships. The provinces which give the largest contingent are those of Abruzzi and Calabria."

increasing numbers. *There* lies a lasting "bone of contention" between the Germanic States and Russia, with *her* growing population, which already feels cribbed and starved upon the bleak northern steppes, and who are ready to fight "to the last man and the last musket" rather than remain shut out from the blooming gardens and genial climate of the South.

Lastly, there is the vast field of Upper and Western Asia, into which the European race seems bent upon overflowing, alike by land and by sea; and where, while Russia already marks for her own the chief region occupied by the falling Ottomans, the maritime nations of Europe, especially the British and French, will be drawn towards an occupation of the southern, at least of the isthmal, portion of the great continent extending between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.

We are apt to underrate or wholly overlook an urgent necessity which at present lies upon the Russian Empire, — upon that vast mass of semi-barbaric population which still lies beyond the pale of civilized Europe, and which resembles, to a greater extent than we readily realize, the swarm of half-starving hordes which lay of old beyond the frontier-wall of the Cæsars and their imperial successors.

Eighty millions of human beings occupy the great Sarmatian plain from the Vistula to the

Caspian (a westward extension into Europe [of the steppes of Upper Asia), and such a mass of humanity is no easy burden for the earth to support. Sparsely though the soil be occupied, the Russian peasantry find a great difficulty in extracting from it a bare subsistence. Lying inland from the sea, those semi-Asiatic plains suffer the extremes alike of summer heat and of winter cold. The succession of crops, and the almost ceaseless labors of agriculture, which are possible under the "open winters" of our islands, and which mitigate our lack of cultivable area, are unknown on the Russian steppes, where the soil is frost-bound for well-nigh half the year; and the peasants, condemned to idleness, huddle and muse round the wood-fire in their smoky cabins, rejoicing, too, whenever they can afford it, in *vodki* and intoxication. And this population, sluggish though it be, still grows; while the steppes and the climate remain as before! In this unprovided-for increment of population, nihilism finds a favorable field; while the vaguely dreamy temperament of the Slavonians, and especially the proneness to communism (to which they are bred by their immemorial "village communities"), make them ready believers in a socialistic millennium to arise upon the swept board of the world.

Again and again has the Russian Government desired to remove portions of this population by

emigration into its Asiatic territories ; and here and there small Cossack communities have been planted therein. But in his present stage of development, — and largely, apparently, by racial sentiment, — the Russian peasant clings to the soil, like a limpet to the rock. His village-community is his world ; his sole idea of life is to cultivate the hereditary bit of ground, the allotment gradually diminishing as each village-community increases in numbers. Good soldier though he becomes, he wails bitterly when carried off by the recruiting-officers from his native village ; and a new settlement, however promising, has no charms in his sight when it must be preceded by long marchings away into strange and unknown regions.

It may seem a strange remark, yet it is a true one, that an export-trade is the best security against domestic famine. No man will produce more of any thing than he requires for his own wants, or can profitably sell to others. Accordingly, in a secluded district, or where there exists no foreign trade, a peasant population produces only enough for its own wants : each man restricts his labor to cultivating only so much ground as suffices for himself and family ; whereby, of course, there is no surplus acreage or production to compensate any failure of the customary crop. But introduce foreign trade, — a foreign or external demand, — and then, sub-

ject to the limits of the "effective demand," each peasant acquires a motive to produce as much as possible ; so that, when a bad harvest occurs, the produce which used to be sold abroad is consumed at home. The actual loss is as great as before ; but there is no famine, only poverty and pinching. The great lines of railway recently constructed in Russia have been of immense service in developing the natural resources of that vast country, and in augmenting production in general. But the ominous fact remains, that population is increasing faster than food-production ; and in the memorably bad harvest-year, 1879, actual famine prevailed over extensive provinces of that empire. Even Russia can no longer feed herself in bad years, and American corn has been imported into the steppes.

When such a change is taking place in Russia, which hitherto has been the chief granary of Europe, it ought not to surprise our readers, — though probably it is a novel thought to them, — that our entire continent is undergoing a similar change ; and over the greater part of it the change has already progressed much further than in sparsely peopled Russia. In truth, Europe — the centre and heart of modern civilization — begins to repeat on a larger scale the experience of Italy, the heart of the old Roman world. To philosophic observers, there will

be no strangeness in the thought that the great modern world should exhibit, in many respects, the well-known historic phenomena which marked the course of the smaller, but at least equally brilliant, Mediterranean world; and that, looking back across the dissevering gulf of the dark ages of Europe, we should find in the old Roman world some parallelism with the phenomena of present times. The Italian peninsula, the original source and permanent headquarters of Roman dominion, was also, from its geographical position and configuration, well fitted to be the chief seat of commerce for that old Mediterranean world. Stretching far out from the Continent into the calm and sunny waters of the Inland Sea, Italy became the centre of commerce, receiving the trade as well as the spoils and tribute of the surrounding regions. While imperial Rome became the grand magnet of population, attracting residents from all parts of the surrounding world, large and populous cities arose throughout the peninsula; and the population of Italy outstripped its agricultural productions. Trade and tribute, and the imperial expenditure, co-operating with natural increase, created a population largely urban, and in excess of the domestic production of food. So early as the time of Livy, the corn of Egypt and Libya had become indispensable for the sustenance of the

population of Italy. Partly from choice and for profit, yet nevertheless as a fundamental necessity, the bulk of the Italian population had taken to commerce, manufactures, and the numerous retail trades which are concomitants of commerce and of a wealthy expenditure. And apart from a portion of the tribute-money from the provinces, or its equivalents, this trade and commerce were indispensable to pay for the large annual importations of food. Italy, the heart of the Roman Empire, must otherwise have starved; and the classic historian lamented that the mother-country of the Legions, where previously "every acre had its man," had in his day become dependent upon the winds and the waves for the means of subsistence!

We might go much farther than this in such a parallel. There is much in the later history of Roman Italy which finds a parallel, both materially and morally, in the present condition of Europe at large. But, confining ourselves to the single matter here dealt with, we may point to the fact, that, apart from the natural increase of trading and commercial pursuits in old Italy, owing to there being no more land for agricultural occupation, an actual (and not merely a relative) decrease of cultivation ere long occurred, as a direct result of the importation of corn from countries where it was grown far more cheaply than was possible in Italy.

This result, also, is coming in Europe. Just as the Roman roads, and especially the incomparably cheap water-carriage of the Mediterranean, sufficed to bring vast supplies of cheap grain from North Africa and Syria into the markets of Italy; so, during the last thirty years, have railroads and steam-navigation been bringing to Europe in increasing abundance the cheap grain of the United States and other quarters of the outlying world. A happy circumstance for Europe, no doubt; but its effect must be to quicken and precipitate that change from agriculture to trade, from rural life to urban, by rendering unprofitable the less-fertile portions of the soil, which hitherto have sufficed to yield a maintenance to their cultivators. Thus trade, manufactures, commerce, must more and more occupy the nations, as the predominant industry of Europe, — alike as the means of employment for the population, and to pay for the ever-increasing importations of food. The influx of American corn would stop at once unless there be an equivalent outflow of surplus produce from Europe. And there can be no such equivalence unless the manufactures of Europe find throughout the world as effective a demand as that which starving Europe confers upon the grain produce of the prairies.

And so we come back to the fact, that the nations of Europe have become too numerous

for the soil; that, even as regards the mere necessities of life, the supply is not always adequate; while, contemporaneously, there is a growing and well-nigh imperious demand for a higher scale of living, — of itself demanding an increase of production, and which, when not gratified, largely transmutes itself into political discontent, shaking the peace of kingdoms, and into social theories and conspiracies which would destroy European civilization itself, and transiently reduce the present heart of the world to a warring chaos or a charred blank. New fields and outlets are wanted, alike for the people and for their industry. The industrial and productive power of the European peoples is far from exhausted; judged even by present standards, it is but half developed: but ere it *can* be developed, and made more profitable to its possessors, there must be new markets, more outlets for its labor and products, yielding that profitable return without which no increase of industry can be expected, or would voluntarily be sustained.

It is a fact, and one highly creditable to that ambitious and far-seeing potentate, that it was for trade and commerce that Peter the Great pushed forward the frontiers of Russia alike to the east and to the west. It was to obtain this indispensable foundation of civilized well-being, as well as of national power, that he so strenu-

ously strove to bring Russia out of her seclusion and isolation as a purely inland state, and to force his way to the sea, — that common ground of earth's nations, and the connecting highway between all the various regions of the globe. It was for trade, together with the political power which comes with wealth, that the great Czar forsook the natural Muscovite metropolis, Moscow, and remorselessly (because with a vast expenditure of serf-labor and human life), built a new capital upon the Baltic Sea ; and it was with a similar intent that he waged his wars with the Turks, in order to open out Russia upon the Euxine, and by and by, through the possession of Constantinople, upon the Mediterranean. For trade, extending his policy to the farther side of Asia, he made treaties with China, and obtained at Kiachta, just outside the Great Wall, an *entrepôt* for the Chinese trade with Europe, and a haven for the Russian caravans after their long journeyings across the steppes of Upper Asia. For trade, too, — to re-open one of the old overland routes to India, — Czar Peter carried on alike his intrigues, wars, and explorations on his south-eastern frontier, discerning in the line of the Oxus a waterway up to Balkh and to the Indian or Affghan frontier of the Hindoo Koosh. We need not tell how, within the last twenty years, by the successive conquest of the khanates of Khiva, Bokhara, and Tashkend, Musco-

vite power has been made supreme up to the "Roof of the World," the great dividing mountain-range of Upper Asia; nor how, during the last twelve months, the conquered Tekke Turcomans, with their host of daring cavalry, have become dependent allies of the Czar; nor how, following the tribe with offers of profitable peace to their last stronghold, Russia has at length opened a way for her caravans to the ancient and once famous city of Merv; while her railway from the Caspian will soon have its terminus within a march or two from Herat. And wherever the Russian flag goes, Russian trade alone is permitted to follow; and British or other goods are peremptorily excluded by hostile tariffs. The attempt is now about to be made, and probably with success, to divert the great river Oxus from its embouchure in the Aral Sea, leading it back into its ancient course to the Caspian: so that, both by railway and waterway, Russian trade and military power will extend right across the northern frontier of Persia and Afghanistan, presenting an impervious barrier against all competing British trade from the south, while securing Central Asia as a rich preserve for her own merchants,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The St. Petersburg correspondent of "The Standard" says (Dec. 13), "In reference to the report that representations are being made both at St. Petersburg and Bokhara in regard to privileges said to have been granted by the Emir in favor of

not to say as a vast recruiting-ground for the further extension alike of her arms and her trade into the still more coveted regions of Southern Asia. Apart from the important but now seriously imperilled trade from India, the eastern coast of the Black Sea is the only quarter from whence foreign (i.e., non-Russian) merchandise can find a passage into the inland regions of Asia; and the Russian Government takes care to "handicap" and virtually exclude all such competition with the trade of her own people. The once formidable barrier of the Caucasus has long been broken through, by the subjugation of Schamyl and the Circassians; and the recent annexation of Batoum and Kars

Russian merchants, I believe the facts to be as follows: Some months ago the local government in Russian Turkestan, with or without the cognizance of the central authorities, determined to close the Central Asian market to English and Indian goods by laying heavy duties on some articles and totally prohibiting the import of others. As, however, Turkestan is an integral portion of the Russian, just as India is of the British, Empire, Lord Granville held that the existing commercial treaties between Russia and England applied equally on the banks of the Oxus as on the shores of the Black Sea or Baltic. In this sense representations, have, indeed, been made in St. Petersburg; though with what result, I am not aware. It is obvious that Bokhara can only be indirectly involved in this question; and being, in form at least, an independent kingdom, untrammelled by treaties with England, it is at liberty to impose what duties it likes on English goods. Moreover, having no agent there, it is difficult to see how we could make representations unless through the friendly intervention of Russia, — a course that would hardly recommend itself to any English government."

has given to Russia a complete monopoly of the direct trade-routes from the Euxine eastwards, and some influence also over the old caravan-route from Erzeroum into Persia.<sup>1</sup> The latest news is, that the Russian Government has appointed "a new and more important commission to consider the Caucasus transit question," and is anxiously considering the best means by which the last relics of this old trade can be obstructed, — with the object of adding Persia (or at least the northern and best portion of that country) to the vast Asiatic region which by her conquests Russia now appropriates, and fences round with prohibitive tariffs, as a preserve for the trade of her own people.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> At the January meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, Col. Champain read a paper on the subject of commercial routes into Persia from the sea; in which he said it was a fact which unpleasantly struck the English traveller, that a very much greater proportion of imported articles came from Russian than from British sources. Twenty years ago it was otherwise; but of late great changes had taken place in the neighborhood of Northern Persia, all tending to improve the conditions under which the Russian competed with the British merchant. The only means by which British trade could now penetrate into Persia would be from the south, by improving the navigation of the Karun River, and obtaining the right to use it. Our trade and influence in Persia, says Col. Champain, are receding; and he believes, that (unless something be done), in a few years' time Bushire, Bunder Abbas, and Shivaz will be the only parts of the country where traces of British trade will linger.

<sup>2</sup> The latest news on the trans-Caucasian transit-trade is

Russia, in truth, has begun in downright earnest the work of trade-extension and colonizing conquest; and every year this pressure from within outwards will grow more imperious. Easy it is to say, Has she not territory enough and to spare? are there not some minerals undeveloped here and there, or some cultivable soil which scientific agriculture could profitably utilize? We may grant all that, yet it will go for little. Really, as much might be said (proportionately) with respect to our own isles, from which for half a century emigration has been flowing as a recognized necessity. Wealth will not expend itself upon small and doubtful profits if it can do so upon larger ones; nor will wealth sacrifice any percentage of its gains for the sake of developing the resources of its own country: while without wealth, or "capital," a population must exist simply by such industry, or upon such soil and other resources, as unassisted labor can turn to profitable account. We repeat—and is it not an obvious

given in "The Daily News" (Feb. 15), in a telegram from St. Petersburg, as follows: "It is officially stated that the government has decided, in the interest of Russian trade and industry, to maintain a strict protective customs tariff in the trans-Caucasian transit-trade. This announcement will be received with great satisfaction by the Russian press, which, with one or two exceptions, is strenuously advocating the abolition of the transit of European goods to Persia and Central Asia *via* the trans-Caucasian region."

truth to reflecting minds?—that even in our own islands (although the most favored spot on earth for capital and the other aids to material improvement and production) there *might be* room or means for employment-giving subsistence for a larger population than can at present exist here with advantage either to themselves or to the state. And doubtless—certainly probably—as time rolls on, the means for such increased employment and subsistence may be found. But here, as elsewhere, that condition of affairs must come slowly. What is more: here, as in other countries, it must come chiefly from *more trade*,—from increased commerce with other countries; creating new markets for the products of industry, and thereby, through an increased demand, rendering labor more profitable, even although exerted upon work or resources which at present will not pay.

In short, it is with the present that we have to do; and, so judging, we find almost every country in Europe—we might say, our whole Continent without any exception—rapidly growing in the condition under which the population, with ever-rising wants, becomes in excess of the present powers of their territory, and requiring new outlets or resources to maintain them in comfortable existence. Really the thing itself is nothing new. We have seen it exhibited

in single countries, notably in our own. The only peculiarity of the times is, that the change is now in progress and steadily increasing throughout *our whole continent*. The change is not a simple, but a very complicated one. It is not mere growth of population that is producing the embarrassment; for, in truth, trade and the means of industrial development have fairly kept pace with the growth of population in Europe. Indeed, although there may be local exceptions, it will hardly be questioned that the condition of the people is distinctly improved, — in our own country greatly improved. But not less visibly has there been a change of views and habits; and, in the main for good (although very serious peril may come of it), people are no longer content with the scale of existence which contented their fathers. This also, in itself, is nothing new, — it has prevailed at all times under a progressive civilization; but it is becoming new in its effects, — it begins to constitute a distinct and serious fact in Europe, where the growth and growing wants of the population are everywhere becoming in excess of the productive powers of the soil.

Happily for Great Britain, the Napoleonic wars left us in possession of colonies and dependencies, at least one-half of which is almost unoccupied territory; while our maritime position, and our leadership in navigation, offer un-

equalled opportunities for ready emigration. And these happy opportunities have undoubtedly quickened in our islands the new human career of emigration; so that, dense as our population is, the condition of the masses is distinctly superior to what it has ever been before, and to what it is on the Continent. The lesser opportunities for emigration, together with inferior locomotive enterprise, combine to load the social safety-valve upon the Continent to a more perilous point than is to be expected here. Indeed, what we have to point out is, that the actual amount of emigration is no correct criterion of the extent to which a country is becoming inadequate for the support of its inhabitants; and that, even were there no overt sign like that of the increasing exodus, the need for emigration, or for new channels of trade and industry for the employment of the people, is really much stronger throughout the Continent as a whole (thinly peopled as much of it is), than in our own country, where the productive and employment-giving power of capital is combined alike with a rare abundance of mineral resources and with the highest degree yet attained in mechanical and chemical invention.

We have seen what gigantic and costly efforts the Russian Government has put forth in order to obtain, besides colonizing-fields, new markets

and channels of trade, in order to increase the scant employment and means of subsistence for the mighty Muscovite nation. But look nearer home, and at the present hour. So imperious is a similar want in Western and Southern Europe, that (besides our own part in the matter) France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, are all striving, each for itself, and coming to loggerheads with one another, as to the appropriation of the African continent; which is to them what Central and Western Asia is to Russia, or what our "empire," our numerous colonies and dependencies, are to us. Having annexed Tunis to her African dominion, and while not averse to pick a quarrel with Morocco on the west, France is pushing her Algerian frontier southwards to Negro-land,<sup>1</sup> and also seeks imperiously to force upon the Malagasy envoys a treaty of partial sovereignty over the great island of Madagascar. Even in the far-off valley of the Congo, the French Chamber of Deputies has unanimously resolved to insist upon converting into a formal treaty of territorial possession the preposterous trickery of a De Brazza! In like spirit, but less preposter-

<sup>1</sup> The ill-fated Flatters' Expedition was designed to survey the line for a railway across the Sahara, commercially uniting Algeria with Timbuctoo and the heart of Negro-land, and also to extend French influence and "protection," if not also the Algerian frontier, southward into the interior.

ously, Spain claims from Morocco the bay and settlement of Santa Cruz, on the plea of having once made a settlement there in the mediæval times. Even little Portugal, aroused, by the territorial *furore* of her neighbors, protests against the De Brazza "treaty," and maintains (we believe justly) that the mouth of the great Congo River, upon both its banks, has for long been a Portuguese fief and settlement. Further, — we had all but forgot to mention it, — France is making or claiming a settlement on the mainland of Eastern Africa, not far from Aden, where a M. Soleillet asserts that he has made a treaty (of the De Brazza kind!) with some native chief, and has actually (he says) "built a wall" around the so-called territory — somewhat, perhaps, as Dido encircled the primitive site of famous Carthage! Then, too, there is the Tonquin Expedition, whereby France seeks an extension of her conquests in the Far East, even at the cost of a war with China — an expedition, however, which, since the death of Gambetta, shows signs of "hanging fire." Ever since 1874 the "République" has urged upon the Government the importance of taking possession of Tonquin, and of late that journal has been developing in detail the advantages which French commerce would derive from the occupation of that country. Finally, as already said, there is the great isl-

and of Madagascar, where France is claiming new rights — again for the sake of our old toast, “Ships, colonies, and commerce.”<sup>1</sup>

In short, we are now in the “era of internationalism” — and with a vengeance! Yet of this, as of some other matters already spoken of, we say again, the phenomenon is not new, except in degree, and partly in complexion. What is the story of the world but that of a ceaseless pouring-forth of the stronger races and peoples into the outlying regions? The double continent of America has been re-peopled by the white race of Europe, and so also have Australia and New Zealand; the British have revived the faded glories of India; the Russians are engaged in a similar work in Upper Asia; and in a few years more, also, the European nations will extend their power over the south-western portion of that grand old continent. Simultaneously, as already said, they

<sup>1</sup> The “Soir” says (Dec. 11), “We remain masters to impose on Queen Ranavaloa and her agents the respect of those treaties and conventions which confer on us the effective protectorate over certain portions of the island of Madagascar, the moral protectorate over all the rest, and a preponderating influence with the Malagasy Government. England recognizes these ancient rights of ours, and will not seek to hamper in any way the freedom of our action. This is one of the conditions necessary for the maintenance of the cordial relations between the two Western Powers, concerning which the Queen, in her speech on the prorogation of Parliament, expressed her desire to see unimpaired.”

are encroaching upon the "dark continent" of the modern world; and who can tell in what new form and complexion Africa will hold its place in the world a century hence? Will it not become to the Latin nations what the New World has been to England and Spain, and what Central Asia is to Russia? And what new states, if not civilizations, may in course of time arise on the green upland savannas of its interior, or upon the shores of its mountain-girdled lakes — which, with the Nile and the Congo, almost exhibit a parallel to the line of the Lakes and the St. Lawrence, together with the Mississippi River, in North America?

No nation can now afford to seclude itself; and none will do so, except it be (what we do not as yet see anywhere in the world) conscious of growing weakness and decay, and only seeks, like some death-stricken animal, to be let alone to die in its seclusion. The "silver streak of sea" theory is as great an anachronism as any statesman could well utter. Nations must not only live in increasing intercourse with one another; but, if civilization is not to expire at its fountain-head, the European nations must find in that intercourse with the outlying world alike outlets for its discontented classes, and trade-born employment and the means of subsistence for those who remain at home.

And commerce has its wars, not less than

kingly ambition or the military rivalry of people. And although governments must appear as the leading actors, it is really a popular necessity (though not yet a popular passion) which now urges on the work of European expansion. Nations fight for trade as well as for boundaries; for new markets as well as for new territories, — which, indeed, go together. Europe is settling down at home, territorially, upon the basis of nationality. Yet the process is not complete: beyond the independence of nations, there are the agglomerations of race; and several serious points of contention remain, tempting to that trial of strength and rivalry in power which beset nations as much as combative individuals, especially where successful war will bring with it not merely laurels but coveted spoils. Meanwhile the old spirit of national rivalry, excited by self-interest, is coming more and more into play in the outlying regions of which Europe is the centre, and wherein its peoples desire new fields for themselves or their industry. Wars, we trust (yet how often in human history has such a hope been falsified!), are drawing to a close; lingering latest in those parts of the globe where the civilized nations come in contact with barbarism — notably, with peoples which refuse to trade. But a wide interval still separates us from that blessed epoch of international peace. And when all Europe is now

visibly on the move for extra-European expansion (a new movement inspired not so much by imperial ambition as by the more imperious demand for the means of subsistence, or at least of that more comfortable existence which is everywhere in growing demand among the masses of population), is there not a more than problematical danger that this extra-European rivalry will be reflected back, if not imitated, at home, — creating new or intensifying old sources of quarrel and combat; and ultimately giving a dread magnitude to any coming European conflict, by bringing upon the decisive battle-fields additional combatants in the shape of auxiliary forces drawn from the adjoining continents?

# SECRET SOCIETIES IN FRANCE.

BY JEHAN DE PARIS.

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THE events which have recently taken place in the coal-mining districts of the Department of Saône-et-Loire — the destruction of chapels and crucifixes, followed immediately by other attacks upon property and persons, and more especially the explosions at Lyons and Montpellier — have revived a question that has long been unasked in France: Are there really in existence secret societies, in which preparations for the destruction of the established order of things are silently and furtively carried on under a deceptive appearance of public security? It may be at once answered, that there are no secret societies in France according to the traditional definition of the term, — none such as those which existed under the Restoration, or at Naples under the Bourbon monarchy. There are non-authorized societies, perfectly well known, though not recognized, acting in broad daylight, their meeting-places unconcealed, and their assemblies and proceedings duly and regu-

larly chronicled in the third page of the newspapers. There may, it is fair to add, also exist a conspiracy, more or less extensive, and formed of widely varying elements, whose object is pillage and incendiarism; but that is a phenomenon in France totally new in itself, and of which no clear idea has yet been formed, if, indeed, such an idea can ever be attainable. Certainly it bears no relation to secret societies hitherto so called.

If we suppose this conspiracy, which certain persons claim to have discovered, to have an actual corporeal existence, — not to be merely a sort of moral and social epidemic, a vague and indefinite evil, but a coalition of wills and interests directed against the existing order of things, — the fact still remains, that it has neither a settled plan nor definite rules of conduct: it is not known to possess chiefs, a flag, or a watchword; it does not propose to seize upon political power and the government of the country, in order to modify the form or the progress of the latter; it does not threaten the life of the politicians at the head of our national affairs. The Russian Nihilists have an immediate and distinctly defined object, — the suppression of the Czar. When they blow up a railway-train, it is with the intention of blowing up Alexander III. The Irish and American Fenians also have a perfectly well-known social and political object

to gain by the crimes and outrages which they perpetrate. They have an organization, funds, and chiefs. Up to the present time there is nothing in France which resembles either the Nihilists or the Fenians. In the heat of discussion, some of our newspapers, even those of the serious and responsible kind, have said that France has both her Nihilists and her Fenians; but when a more discerning spirit of criticism is brought to bear upon the facts, it becomes evident that a great and singular difference exists between the Fenians or the Nihilists, and that conspiracy which is supposed to have revealed itself in certain districts of France. At several points, and at about the same time, explosions took place; threats were addressed to the magistrates and the jury who were sitting at the assize court at Châlons; a number of incendiary placards and proclamations were posted on the walls of the towns, or sown broadcast among the public: but in these insensate productions, and in those outrages, which were more stupid than criminal,—for up to the present moment no man's life has been taken,—not a single feature of organization, not a trace of any chief, or of any definite or definable political object, has been discovered.

On the 18th March, 1871, the case was very different. The Central Committee was a real society, organized for the conquest of political

power, and for the occupation of Paris by force. The committee had its political and military chiefs, its soldiers, its flag, and even its newspapers. The first object of its revolutionary action was to seize upon the Hôtel de Ville, the Prefecture of Police, and the forts with which Paris is surrounded. In this there was a course of action calculated beforehand, and a well-studied aim. That M. Thiers did not go more skilfully to work about laying hands on the Central Committee, that he did not from the first employ all the forces which were needed for such an enterprise in the midst of a general disorganization of the country, no doubt precipitated the explosion of the 18th March, and gave it intensity which it would not have attained under less deplorable circumstances; but it is certain that the Central Committee was a veritable secret society, which had its watchword, and held itself in readiness to act at the first signal.

Lord Beaconsfield said in "Lothair," that the world's future would be divided between the papacy and the secret societies. Thus far there are no signs of the future or the present of the French Republic belonging to the latter. Whether we consider the occurrences that have taken place in the coal-mining basins of the Saône and the Rhône, or whether we study the numerous democratic societies which are in

action in Paris and the departments, it is plain that it is not with secret societies we have to deal; and if social and political perils still threaten France more or less, — for under every *régime* there are always some perils for the people, — we must acknowledge that their nature and aspect are changed.

Instead of secret societies, there must be substituted the expressive societies which are non-authorized — known, if not recognized. The most numerous and powerful group of those which have developed in our democratic republic within the last ten years, under favor of the general liberty, is that constituted by the Syndical, Patronal, and Workmen's Chambers.<sup>1</sup> To attempt the suppression of them at present would be an extremely dangerous enterprise, contrary, not indeed to the text, but to the very principle, of our constitution, and to the spirit of republican government. We are still under the empire of the law of 1791, which laid our economic system in the dust, by destroying the organization of the old *régime*. According to Clause 2 of that law, citizens of the same condition or profession, contractors, keepers of open shops, workmen and journeymen in any craft whatsoever, could not, when they met together, nominate a president or a secretary or syndics, keep registers,

<sup>1</sup> *Chambres syndicales, ouvrières, et patronales.*

take resolutions, hold discussions, or form any rules concerning their alleged common interests. This law, therefore, laid it down as a principle, that workmen in one and the same trade have not common interests ; that their claim to possess common interests ought to be rejected as factious, and tyrannical toward the other sections of French society ; and that those interests could not be made a cause for meeting and deliberation in common. Clause 3 added, "It is forbidden to all administrative municipal bodies to receive any address or petition under the denomination of a state or profession, and to make answer to such address or petition. They are enjoined to declare the nullity of deliberations which shall have been made in any such matter, and to take special care that no effect or execution shall be given to them." The ensuing clauses were designed to give final sanctions of an extremely rigorous kind to the law.

Such is the *régime* under which we have been living for more than eighty years. The Syndical Workmen's Chambers, which are simply professional associations of which workmen and employers of the same trade form part, and whose object is the defence of the common interest of their members, the discussion of contracts, and the fixing of tariffs, are, then, absolutely contrary to French law. Neverthe-

less, since the later years of the empire, 1864 and 1865, they have assumed such dimensions, and, especially since 1871, have developed so rapidly, that it has become impossible to contemplate their suppression. It is a matter of importance, on the contrary, to secure a legal existence for them; and a project of law, already adopted by the Chamber and rejected by the Senate, will certainly be voted in a definitive manner without delay.

The services rendered to the workmen by the Syndical Chambers are very considerable. They offer them means of finding work more easily, without losing their day in fatiguing and vain efforts to obtain it; they inculcate the spirit of order, organization, and saving; several of these Syndical Workmen's Chambers have stores of tools and supplies of all kinds, which they can sell to members and their families at twenty, thirty, or even fifty per cent below the shop prices; they have also superannuation and out-of-work funds. They annex mutual-aid societies to themselves, and have "*cours*" and "*conférences*" on all parts, theoretical or practical, of the trade with which they are concerned. Some have a newspaper of their own; as, for example, the "Alliance of Stokers, Enginemen, and Guards." This is a very important Syndical Chamber; and it is even something more, as it proposes, according

to its own statutes, "to group under the ægis of education" the various societies or Syndical Chambers of the stokers of France. Each chamber preserves its autonomy, its own particular organization, and its statutes: but they strive in concert to promote education among their members; and they organize competitive trials of skill, at which medals, and certificates of merit, are distributed to the best workmen.

The principal Syndical Workmen's Chambers at present are those of the hat-makers, the tailors, and the cabinet-makers. These are the most wealthy and the most numerous. The Syndical Chambers of employers (*patrons*) are useful in the first place to the employers personally, and then to the development of industry and general commerce. They form centres of business where the employers exchange their ideas, discuss the conditions of home commerce and of export trade; and they keep progress, emulation, and activity of mind, constantly up to the mark. The chambers of employers and those of workmen maintain mutual relations. They have adopted the custom of nominating mixed commissions, composed of employers and workmen in equal numbers, in order to settle, by common consent, the conditions of labor, contracts, and tariffs. These committees have prevented several strikes, and have, generally speaking, been beneficial: at

present, however, grave difficulties have arisen from the system, and Parisian industry is in one of the most severely strained positions in which it has found itself for twenty years.

The conflict now in progress between employers and workmen in the cabinet-making and wood-carving trades had its origin in this institution of mixed commissions. The employers, occupied with various cares, and deceived by the security of long possession, had abandoned the habit of attending the meetings of the mixed commission of cabinet-makers: the workmen, on the contrary, attended them with indefatigable assiduity; and on a day when they found themselves almost alone, and masters of the situation, they changed the conditions of work. The employers then woke up, declared that they would not submit to the law of the mixed commission, and carried out a sort of economic *coup-d'état* by closing their workshops. Instead of a workman's strike, there was an employer's strike, or lock-out. It seems to be clearly demonstrated, that the employers could not accept the new conditions imposed by the workmen without exposing their industry, which is one of the most considerable in Paris, to irremediable ruin. Competition with foreign trade, already difficult, would have been impossible; and already Paris, instead of sending furniture to all parts of the world, was beginning

to attract furniture from Belgium, Germany, and Austria. This occurrence may probably bring about important changes in the constitution of the Syndical Chambers, and in their reciprocal positions. The institution of mixed commissions has received a heavy blow; and many employers are of opinion that another mode of mutual relations must be found, the mixed commissions being an instrument over which the workmen would, from various causes, too often acquire the sole power.

Apart, however, from this incident, it has been shown that the Syndical Chambers of every kind in action in Paris, and in the departments, are extra-legal societies, not recognized, not authorized, but acting nevertheless in broad daylight, and perfectly well known. The daily occupation of these societies is entirely economic and social: it is none the less true, that they also exercise an active but intermittent influence, when, for instance, an election is in question, or a political revolutionary movement, like that of the 16th of May, when Marshal MacMahon and the Duc de Broglie had conceived the hope of bringing the country once more into the path of parliamentary monarchy. On these occasions the Syndical Chambers, especially those of the workmen, exercise a far-reaching influence, which penetrates to the very depth of the nation. That influence may

be decisive at a given moment in a country like ours, where universal suffrage exists. In fact, the chambers are very sound and very extensive *cadres*; and the workmen whose intelligence and activity have enabled them to assume the leadership of those associations have under their orders numerous troops who march to the electoral urns with perfect steadiness and discipline.

In these societies there are always certain smouldering embers of politics; and either in periods of repose when the yoke of the painful necessities of existence is for a while forgotten or shifted off, or in national crises when liberty or the country is in danger, a smouldering ember may, in the twinkling of an eye, become a great fire, and emit devouring flames. But, for all that, it may safely be affirmed that there is a promise of safety in the fact, and not a menace or a danger to France and society. The anarchical theories which have made a noise in these latter times do not find their way into our Syndical Chambers. These are composed of the *élite* of our workingmen, a little harsh perhaps, — there is nothing surprising in that, — obstinate in dispute over the conditions of their toil, but intelligent and industrious, opposed to anarchy, and hearty haters of disorder. Thus the workmen's associations of Lyons have loudly testified their indignation at

the explosions that have terrified that city ; and if, on the day of those outrages, their authors had fallen into the hands of the workmen, there would probably have been no need of either gendarmes or judges.

There exists in Paris another species of "groups," — those, exclusively addicted to politics. They approach perhaps a little more nearly to so-called "secret societies ;" but they are not, nevertheless, mysterious. The nomenclature, the character, and the customs of all of them are well known : they convoke their adherents by the plain and simple medium of the newspapers ; and any one may go into and come out of their meetings with extreme facility, provided with an introduction from one or two friends or "companions." These associations may be divided into two principal categories, — the Societies of Free Thought and the Studying Clubs (*Cercles d'Etudes*). The former are in action chiefly in the *banlieue*, or suburbs, of Paris ; and the latter, in the interior of the capital. They are of widely varying shades of opinion ; and they correspond to all the notes of the political gamut, from the most moderate to the most violent. The oldest associations of Free Thought — which are, so to speak, free branches of Freemasonry, — occupy themselves wholly in making sure that their members shall have civil funerals ; and the formal acts of asso-

ciation are only two. One is made when a member accompanies the corpse of a friend to the cemetery, wearing a red *immortelle* at his button-hole; the other, when he is carried thither himself. Other associations of Free Thought, founded within the last ten years in the *banlieue* of Paris, are composed of more active men, — more “advanced,” as the saying is, — whose politics are of a militant order, and who display considerable energy in electoral contests.

In each of the twenty *arrondissements* of Paris, several *Cercles d'Etudes* exist. These are social, or political and social, clubs or *cercles*; and a complete list of them would be as easily supplied as it would be uninteresting. Some among them have hardly any members: others are more numerous, and make a little more noise. They bear various names, some very strange, and invented to strike the imagination of young people; as, for instance, the Equals, the Equality, the Socialist-Atheists, the Young Toilers of the Centre and of the Awakening (this reminds us of the strangely complex signs of certain taverns; for instance, the “Jean Bart and the Low Countries,” the Revolutionary Sentinel, etc., etc.).<sup>1</sup> These pretentious names

<sup>1</sup> *Le Cercle des Égaux, le Cercle de l'Égalité, le Cercle des Athées Socialistes, les Jeunes Travailleurs du Centre et du Réveil, la Sentinelle Révolutionnaire.*

do not indicate very alarming associations: they are chiefly composed of youths, or idle workmen who like to declaim and excite themselves among themselves, but who exercise no serious influence in the workshops. This must not be taken to mean that really dangerous men may not slip into these associations, and that the groups may not make themselves masters of certain district elections in low neighborhoods, like our municipal elections. But in the whole of Paris, or even in the whole of an *arrondissement*, they do not count; yet they are known, and heed is taken of their sayings and doings.

But, it is said, the Government could dissolve these *cercles*, which are, like the Syndical Chambers, *outside legality*, but, unlike the chambers, do not render any public services, and have nothing correct or regular in their organization. No doubt it would be within the right of the Government to dissolve them, but it should be understood that their dissolution would be absolutely illusory. Our law of the 30th of June, 1881, upon the right of holding meetings, did not subject private meetings to any kind of restriction; and it imposed upon public meetings only one single condition, or, rather, a purely formal preliminary, — the declaration that, on a given day, a meeting should be held at a given place. The prefect of police can only

register the declaration : that is his sole part in the matter ; he has not the right to grant any authorization. The utmost he has the right to do is to intervene in the case of any violence being resorted to at the meeting. Under this *régime* of complete liberty, what would be the use of dissolving the *cercles* ? The groups dispersed to-day would be re-formed to-morrow without hinderance, and might hold a meeting on a fixed day in each week, or, indeed, on all the days in succession. This would be equivalent to the permanence of the *cercle* itself.

The enumeration of the various republican or democratic associations of Paris would not be complete without the mention of the small "Blanquist" group, which has survived its chief. A short time ago a Parisian newspaper published a long list of Blanquist groups, arranged by arrondissements, with initials of names and addresses given. It has been proved that this organization, which had, during the life of Blanqui, a purely electoral object, has long since ceased to exist. Several streets, named in the newspaper which states that the meeting of the committees are held there, no longer bear the names inscribed upon the famous list. It is, however, a fact, that a nucleus of Blanquists still exists, and that the newspaper entitled "La Tenaille" is directed by some of those who form it. These men have true political quali-

ties ; they are reserved of speech ; they do not frequent meetings and congresses ; they dislike and despise blusterers. The aspirations of anarchists, collectivists, revolutionary socialists, all those people who have been making so much noise of late, are diametrically opposed to the spirit and traditions of the Blanquists. The dogmas of the faith of that group are unity and authority : decentralization is contrary to their doctrine. If, indeed, it could be said that there still exists a secret society in Paris, it would be this one ; that is to say, it approaches most nearly in temperament to the secret societies of the past. But not only does it consist of only a few members, powerless because they are so few : its faith is enfeebled by want of success, its traditions are broken, and its discipline is in process of dissolution. It is a memory rather than a hope, and, as it were, a last spark of the soul of Blanqui preserved by some devoted friends.

Blanqui himself died in 1879, in a state of profound depression. M. Baur, who knew his system, and considered it an ineffective one, wrote of him as follows : "Blanqui remains a problem to many men of good faith. From the period of his leaving his prison at Clairvaux, it was impossible to form a fair judgment of him. Weighed down with age, broken with thirty-five years passed in prison, with the eye of

death fixed upon him, he was no longer himself. The enmity, the calumny, the moral ostracism, of which he was the victim, had a most fatal influence upon his life, his destiny, and his mind. Being repulsed, he shrank back more and more into his isolation; he exaggerated his revolutionary system, which in the end proved to be powerless; he believed in the possibility of bringing about a serious action secretly by the aid of a little group of devoted friends. In a word, he refined and sharpened his talent for conspiracy, while he allowed his incomparable faculties as a politician and a statesman to remain inactive."

After the Syndical Chambers, the *Cercles d'Etudes*, and the Blanquist group, what remains? Nothing, unless we take into account a certain shapeless amalgamation of revolutionary collectivism and socialist anarchy. This does not constitute a party, or even parties; it is not a secret society, nor secret societies: it is a vague, indeterminate element, formed of dreams, passions, vices, and simplicity, of ignorance and anger, and also, to some extent, of sincerity and noble aspirations toward an ideal justice. This element is to be found in all countries, and its presence in a great free democracy like the French is very natural. Collectivism, communism, anarchism, are rather current ideas, confused tendencies toward a

better future, which naturally must manifest themselves among populations overburdened with toil, eager for comfort, as they behold the luxury of modern industry, and acquiring ever-increasing liberty and instruction, although they are still very far from the true intellectual light. Mingled in this current, men from all the groups and all the *cercles* are to be found, pure and ardent imaginations side by side with gloomy and malignant minds. It is a characteristic of this thing, to be confused, shapeless, and without self-consciousness. It is a sort of non-organized, chaotic matter, formed of heterogeneous molecules; and each time that one of these molecules becomes conscious, and acquires will and defined intelligence, it goes off elsewhere, and takes its place amid the organized parties and groups.

Collectivism, if we want to define it in a few words, in so far as these vague theories are definable, means the placing of capital in the hands of a "collectivity" of workingmen. Collectivists contend that capital is nothing else than the product, the accumulated toil, of the hands of former generations; or, to use the words of Karl Marx, "of unpaid labor." Capital is, therefore, to return to the whole of the workers: the mine, the works, the factory, are to be the property of the working "collectivity" which produces the profits of the mine, the

works, and the factory. This collective property is to pass on from the present generation of workers to the next, and so on, being always possessed and exploited in common. The collectivist system does not include personal property, which may be acquired by the economy of the workman ; while communism, of which we never hear any thing nowadays, excludes every form of personal property.

The French anarchists do not want any electoral power to exist under any form whatsoever ; nor, according to their own expression, any capitalist or governmental authority. They believe in living in the bosom of a federation of personal forces spontaneously associated. Admitting neither government, nor property, nor laws, they are necessarily brought back to the most primitive and the most childish expression of communism. An anarchist group (eleventh arrondissement) published a programme some weeks ago. It contains the following statement of what they want :—

1. "In the political order, the abolition of the state, that of governmental authority, whatever may be its form, its name, and its defenders ; its replacement by the free federation of free producers, spontaneously associated ; that is to say, anarchy.
2. In the economical order, the abolition of individual property and capitalist authority, and the placing of the social wealth at the disposal of all, in such manner that each person, working according to

his faculty, may freely consume according to his needs ; that is to say, communism."

The anarchists are internationalists, just as they are communists. There is for them no "country," as there is no state and no property. It was they who recently interrupted M. Clémenceau at the meeting at the Cirque Fernando, by exclaiming, "There is no nation ! There is no party !" They do not admit the republic any more than the monarchy, nor do they grant any authority to the principle of universal suffrage.

The anarchists, the collectivists, and others, with their different degrees and their multiplied shades, have troubled our recent meetings, and especially the Congress of St. Etienne, with their quarrels. M. Jules Guesde, one of the most active representatives of collectivism, published the first collectivist manifesto in 1878, on the occasion of the Socialist Congress which was to have met in Paris during the Exhibition, but was prevented by M. Dufaure, at that time minister. This manifesto says, —

"The foundation of production is given up to the despotism of individual interests : to require that it should be otherwise, that *disindividualized* capital should be placed entirely and in perpetuity at the disposal of the *producing activity* of all, is to require that social production be carried to its maximum."

M. Jules Guesde does not, then, admit either individual property or savings under any form ;

but neither does he appear to admit violent revolution. He does not make common cause with the revolutionary anarchists.

There is another collectivism, besides that of M. Jules Guesde ; and its principal representative is M. Malon. The latter, who is of a more moderate and reflecting turn of mind, includes the principle of individual saving in his scheme of collectivism, which we have already defined. In his system, collective property and personal property have their respective places. He believes in universal suffrage, in the republic, and in the country. Now, this is what occurred at the Congress of St. Etienne. Against him M. Jules Guesde had the anarchists on one side, and on the other the moderate collectivists who follow M. Malon. There was, just as there is in Parliament, a sort of coalition of the Right with the extreme Left. M. Jules Guesde, who was in the middle, was crushed. It was he who, if we are not mistaken, founded, about two years ago, what he called "the Federation of the Centre." Seeing that this device did not succeed in Paris, he went to Rheims and Lyons and St. Etienne to hold "*conférences*," and preach his collectivism. He passed through those central departments in which education is by no means advanced, and where great masses of working-people, whose lives are particularly hard, congregate. After this propa-

ganda the Federation of the Centre began to be talked of. It is a good name, and looks well in the socialist journals ; but it is only a name. No Federation of the Centre exists, and no association is organized under the direction of M. Jules Guesde. His melancholy adventure at St. Etienne, on his own stage, demonstrated both his own weakness and that of all the others, collectivists or anarchists.

In the course of this analysis we have passed in review the Syndical Chambers, the *cercles* or clubs, and various manifestations of a socialism which is a prey to internal divisions ; but we have not ascertained the existence of any force secretly organized against the actual state of things in France. We may look in all directions for the secret society, we shall not find it. There remains, then, only one source to which we may refer for an explanation of the outrages that have excited the public mind. We can only hold them to be the effect of a sort of moral contagion, kept up by the passions of some, by the sufferings of others, and by the violent prompting of evil counsellors ; and, as the public mind in France has been extremely impressionable since the war of 1870 and the Commune of 1871, this contagion has been invested with an importance which would not have been assigned to it at any other time.

“But,” it has been said, “where does the

dynamite which was used at Montceau-les-Mines, and which exploded in the *café* on the Place Bellecour at Lyons, come from?" It is not very difficult to answer that question. Gunpowder is a monopoly of the state; it is manufactured in government workshops, by licensed and brigaded workmen, who are entitled to a pension, and are, in reality, agents of the government, placed under its constant supervision and inspection. The administration and the manufacture of gunpowder are organized in almost the same way as the manipulation of tobacco, and are national industries. This is not the case with dynamite: that explosive is freely manufactured by private individuals, in private workshops, and may be bought and sold without let or hinderance. The greater portion of the dynamite consumed in France comes from the factory of M. Lemoine at Honfleur.

It is true that the manufacture is subjected to daily inspection by an officer in the service of "indirect contributions;" but this is purely a fiscal measure, and its object is to secure the regular payment of the duties to the state. The agents gauge the dynamite which they find in the workshops of the factories, calculate the quantity that has been issued, and settle the amount of tax to be collected. For each issue they hand over a permit, which is detached from a register with a counterfoil. This is the sys-

tem by which the circulation of our wines and spirits is regulated. The dynamite that comes out of the factory at Honfleur has four different and clearly defined distinctions. It is purchased by the state for the purpose of experiments ; by the ship-owners of Havre and Dunkerque, who charter vessels for the cod-fisheries ; it is bought for great mining operations, like those at Montceau ; and also for the smaller enterprises of the quarrymen who remove the rocks from the Jura and other mountains. Poachers also have begun to use dynamite to kill fish in rivers and ponds.

No other modes of employing dynamite than those given above have hitherto been known. A plausible explanation of the manner in which the miners at Montceau contrived to procure the dynamite that they used has been given. It is this : The explosible matter, having arrived at the mine, is distributed each morning by the foremen to the miners about to go down the shaft. In the dark depths of the mine, supervision must be difficult ; and the nature of the work to be done, that of explosion and destruction, render it still more difficult. The head men assert that it is very easy, for instance, for a workman to save one capsule per day, to put it aside, and take it away with him when he comes up out of the mine. It is evident, that, if a number of workmen have each been able to secrete a capsule per day for several months,

a considerable quantity of dynamite must be in criminal hands. Some of the workmen may themselves have used them in the explosions that have occurred: others, weak rather than guilty, may have sold them to add to their pay. The coal districts generally comprise glass-works and founderies: there, also, it is extremely easy to abstract a glass capsule, or to prepare a metal capsule to hold the dynamite. Workmen who mean mischief have, therefore, every facility for carrying out their own notions or acting on the evil suggestions of others.

There is, however, another means by which dynamite may get into the hands of certain persons. The "kilo" of dynamite at Honfleur costs the manufacturer about twelve francs; the transport-permit costs him twenty-four. This is an enormous charge, it must be acknowledged, being double the price of the fabric. Thus every kilo of dynamite bought at Honfleur costs the purchaser, with the manufacturer's profit, forty francs. The quarrymen of the Jura are not rich: they are, for the most part, in a small way of business, and find it hard to live. It is thought that they supply themselves with dynamite fraudulently brought into the country from Switzerland; and this supposition is supported by the fact that the quantity of dynamite regularly employed in France for industrial purposes seems to exceed the quantity taken note of by

the agents of the "*contributions indirectes*" in the factories. If dynamite be fraudulently imported for industrial purposes, it is easy to perceive that miscreants may procure it for their own ends by the same means. Since the occurrences at Montceau and Lyons, a decree, dated 28th October, has subjected the employment and the sale of dynamite to stricter conditions. Henceforth any person who requires to make use of dynamite, or of any explosive whose basis is nitro-glycerine, must previously address to the prefect of his department a written declaration countersigned by the mayor of the Commune, or, if in Paris, by the commissary of police of his quarter. In addition to this, he must, within eight days after he has received the dynamite, render an account to the authorities of the use which he has made of it.

We are acquainted with several great typical secret societies,—the Fenians, the Nihilists, the Carbonari, and the Tugendbund (Society of Virtue) which was founded at Königsberg after the taking of Tilsit, to deliver Prussia from foreign rule, and for the material and moral reconstruction of the country, which seemed to be falling into utter ruin. There is no need to dwell upon Freemasonry: it is a universal association of such breadth and flexibility that it adapts itself to all places and all peoples; and it has now been for a long time



plunged in a sort of lethargy. The others have always had one or two aims, and sometimes both together, — to deliver the country from an interior despotism, and elevate the people toward an ideal of liberty, happiness, and justice; or, to deliver the country from a foreign despotism, and reconquer the national independence lost or lessened by the fate of war. France enjoys within itself almost unlimited liberty; and, though the country has been mutilated by war, it knows that the armed conflicts of nations are neither prepared nor settled in these days by the aid of that blunted instrument, — secret societies. Our “League of Patriots,” presided over by the eminent historian M. Henri Martin, bears no more resemblance to a secret society than the League of Education presided over by M. Jean Macé.

France has not its Tugendbund, and it has no longer Carbonari of any degree. All the secret societies of the Restoration and the empire, modelled more or less upon the Italian Carbonari, proposed to themselves to take up the interrupted task of the French Revolution, to realize the great principles of 1787, to prepare a future of “liberty and bread” for the nation. All the chiefs of the liberal parties of that time, — such as Lafayette, Dupont de l’Eure, Benjamin Constant, and others, who did honor to the press, to literature, and to the tribune,

hastened to enroll themselves in these societies, and became the soul of them. Now the national sovereignty is wielded in all its plenitude: the republic is based upon universal suffrage; the rights of meeting, association, and freedom of publicity, are exercised upon an almost unlimited field. As war is made at the present day in Europe with entire peoples, so in France politics are conducted by the whole nation. These immense displays of force, whether it acts within or without, render the organization of secret societies henceforth absolutely useless; and, indeed, their impotence has been made evident in France by the whole history of events for eighty years.

# HOME RULE, SOCIALISM, AND SECESSION.

BY J. WOULFE FLANAGAN.

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Two policies are possible for Ireland: the Imperial policy, which aims at the assimilation of Celtic Ireland into the body of the United Kingdom; and the "Nationalist" policy, which designs the creation of a separate, alien, and hostile Irish state. *Via media* there is none, for federalism and home rule are fancy constitutions of a clearly unworkable kind. Practical politicians on both sides are agreed as to the real issue. The Irish Executive have made a determined attempt to use the Coercion Act with effect. After a long interval, convictions have been obtained for agrarian murder. Extraordinary crime has diminished in amount, if not in gravity. Rent, it is said, has in some places been fairly paid. The efforts of the Executive have been met with promptitude and decision. The Land League has been revived under a new name. The "no-rent" manifesto has been conditionally re-issued, and, with irresistible logic, extended to "judicial" rents. The government

of the Queen has been publicly described as "an organization of pirates and brigands;"<sup>1</sup> and a well-planned series of outrages has reminded judges, jurors, and policemen that "the unwritten law" has sanctions of its own. Two remarkable articles have recently appeared on the question thus raised practically in Ireland; the one by Mr. Healy, the other by Mr. John Morley. Both take the "Nationalist," or, as it is perhaps better named, the "Secessionist," point of view. Both limit their present demand to "some form of local self-government," but they do so "without prejudice" to further claims. The nature and extent of the "self-government" to be conceded are left conveniently vague, but in both papers the home rule of Mr. Shaw is defended by arguments expressly devised to cover the home rule of Michael Davitt. The premises laid down involve the erection of Ireland into an independent state. There is barely a hint of the inevitable conclusion. It is at most a distant and well-nigh impossible danger, a mere "Conservative reason" for delay, which should not hinder "modern Liberals" from hastening to "the next step." The traditions of that party are relied on with justice. If Liberals can be cajoled into granting "a large and liberal measure of local self-government" now,

<sup>1</sup> Speech of Mr. Healy at St. Mullins, County Carlow.—*Freeman*, Nov. 27.

electioneering necessities and the fostering care of the American-Irish will surely do the rest. The "germs" will develop in their season ; and a peal of the "Chapel Bell" will awaken great statesmen to the fact, that, "whether they intended it or not," they have created a nation, whose *de facto* independence it would be foolish and illogical to deny. Like "the First Whig," in Milton, they may be something startled at the sight of their own progeny ; but they will quickly school their disgust under the sense of common interests, acknowledge their paternity, and offer terms for the political support of the new power.<sup>1</sup>

Four principal reasons are put forward by both writers for the concession of home rule. They are : (1) the utter weariness of Englishmen at the prospect of an eternal wrangle ; (2) fear of the American-Irish ; (3) fear of the terrorists ; and (4) the iniquities of the landlords. The first three are clearly as forcible arguments for secession as for home rule. If utter weariness or fear can drive modern Liberals to federalism, it may well be argued that a little extra fatigue, or a few more assassinations, will extort absolute independence. This idea of an imperial race worried out of their empire is new in history. Perhaps, after all, it is not very likely to be first realized by the

<sup>1</sup> Paradise Lost, ii. 744.

countrymen of Marlborough and Wellington and Clive. But it will always be precious, as illustrating the conception of public duty entertained by thinkers, who are scandalized at our Irish incapacity to discern the value of general principles.<sup>1</sup> "England expects every man to do his duty," — if he is not "utterly weary," *bien entendu!* It is a strange version of the famous watchword, and has scarcely the charm or the promise of the old.

The second ground for concession — the fear of the American-Irish<sup>2</sup> — reveals such an estimate of English courage as might be expected from those who advise Englishmen to abandon their duty for their ease. It will be an evil day for the popular party in Ireland, if ever America should interfere on their behalf. All English opinion, more especially the opinion of the democracy, draws a sharp line between concession to domestic agitation, and submission to foreign menace. Threats of the kind could only result in the estrangement of that goodwill which Mr. Healy admits is felt toward Ireland, and possibly in the denial of civil and

<sup>1</sup> "One is inclined," writes Mr. Morley, "to put down the whole of Ireland as a nation of casuists. The value of a general principle or a strict construction is unknown."

<sup>2</sup> The American argument is, in one form or other, rather popular just now. Mr. A. M. Sullivan fairly threatens us with the active interposition of the United States through their "established government." — *Observer*, Dec. 4.

political rights to subjects who were leagued with a foreign power.

The third reason stands upon a somewhat different footing. The existence of a revolutionary party of the ultra-Jacobin type in Ireland cannot be denied. They have given us too recent tokens of their activity and their strength. If the Nationalists could prove their policy capable of disarming the terrorists, they would solve the problem of the day. But this is just the point in which their argument is weakest. Beyond a few commonplaces about "giving public spirit an outlet," and "letting off the steam," they do not attempt to show how home rule would lessen the power of the anarchists, or strive to meet the reasoning of those who maintain that such a measure would increase the force of socialism.

The conclusive answer to these first three reasons is, that there is no finality in the policy proposed, and that it can satisfy neither the obstructionists, nor the American-Irish, nor the terrorists. The admission of the one writer, that "any effectual form of home rule" involves the absolute control of such subjects as land-tenure, religion, and trade, by the Irish democracy, and that English opinion is not yet ripe for such concessions, coupled with the assurance of the other, that the attainment of minor reforms will mean "an additional strength

to the popular party in Ireland, and an additional leverage in the carrying of greater ones," sums up the argument against them. Local self-government would, in fact, arm the Parnellites in a day with the very weapon the Liberals are laboriously forging for themselves,—a real working caucus of the American pattern, with "pickings" complete, the great fly-wheel whose absence mars the Birmingham article so sadly. English Radicals hope to perfect their own machine by giving its members the control of county government and county patronage in England. It does not lie in their mouths, to contend that this very endowment, which is to make them irresistible, will enfeeble the caucus of the Land League. The Irish county boards would be, like the corporations before them, "normal schools of agitation."<sup>1</sup>

The denunciations of the landlords are scarcely worth answering. They are irrelevant, unless the "form of local self-government" asked for is "home rule in Mr. Davitt's

<sup>1</sup> "Even now," says Mr. T. D. Sullivan, "the people are working out the principle of self-government. Wherever there is a representative body, little or great, in whose election the people have a voice, there the people are obtaining for themselves a real representation, *and are leading up to home rule*" [cheers].—(Speech at Navan) *Freeman*, Nov. 27. A conference of the elected guardians of the entire county of Cork has been lately held, to consider the effect of recent legislation on the land question, and "to protest against the administration of the Land Act."—*Times*, Nov. 18.

sense;" that is, home rule *plus* spoliation. It is, however, amusing to find the English writer declaring the landlords "convicted" by the judgments of the Land Court;<sup>1</sup> and his Irish colleague describing that august tribunal as "a Land League Court," with one of its members "in a wig and gown to make him look respectable — *put to lower rents.*"<sup>2</sup> I have said

<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered, when estimating the value of this testimony, that Mr. Gladstone has publicly declared all Conservatives disqualified for sitting in the Land Court, because the Land Law has to be administered in a partisan spirit; that the sub-commissioners are exposed to the political pressure from which other judges are scrupulously guarded; and that this pressure has at times been freely applied. See, for example, the Prime Minister's reply to Mr. Healy's questions on "*Adams v. Dunseath.*" The only other witness against the landlords, whom Mr. Morley names, is Sir Walter Scott. All the rest of his evidence is anonymous. He confidently accuses landlords and agents of sending up "proscription lists" to the Castle, under the Coercion Act, containing the names of "thousands" of "independent and vigorous characters." This is a very cruel charge. It is easily made, it increases hatred of a defenceless class, it is utterly untrue, and it is utterly impossible for us to disprove. There are, indeed, only one or two men in England in a position to contradict it. Happily one of them has spoken out. "No arrests," Mr. Forster assured his constituents (*Times*, Dec. 8), "absolutely none, were made at the instigation of landlords or agents. *Very rarely did the landlords make representations at all.*" The Act, he went on to say, was used to lock up boycotters, and actual and intending murderers. So much for the "vigorous and independent characters," and for Mr. Morley's accurate knowledge of Irish gentlemen. Mr. Healy says the landlords intimidate electors.

<sup>2</sup> Speech at St. Mullins.

that both writers evidently regard secession as the ultimate solution of the Irish question, and that their reasoning is directed quite as much to further that policy as to promote home rule. Here the objection of want of finality does not, at first sight, apply. Secession must be opposed on somewhat broader grounds.

The authority of the dead has not much weight with the left wing of the Liberal party. They think, like Urban VIII., that the slightest word of their living Pope overrules the political decrees of a hundred who are gone. But most educated men will acknowledge that a long and continuous tradition is entitled to respect. And through all the line of statesmen who have governed these kingdoms, from Mr. Pitt to Lord Hartington, there has never been, till yesterday, one moment's paltering, one adroit ambiguity, or pretence at hesitation, on this question of repeal. Men of all parties have hitherto declined to tamper with a design which they "felt and knew must make Great Britain a fourth-rate power in Europe, and Ireland a savage wilderness."<sup>1</sup> It is needless to establish the continuity of this belief by a pile of quotations. For eighty years the necessity of the Union has been held "a truth too deep for argument." The burden of proof lies on those who would question this cardinal principle of our national life.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Robert Peel, Hansard, xxiii. 3d series, p. 69.

That a novel policy should be defended by novel reasoning, is not strange; but it is certainly remarkable, that the very symptoms which convinced Pitt and Canning that a Union was imperative, should be the Home Rulers' chosen argument for repeal. The dread that Ireland "would receive and cherish and mature the principles of the French Revolution" impelled Canning to force on the Union.<sup>1</sup> The prospect of "a violent political revolution, like the Jacobin Revolution that saved France," impels certain "modern English Liberals" to demand repeal. The premises of the statesman and the philosophers are identical, and must be admitted. The "principles which go to array the physical force of the lower orders of the people against the educated and governing parts of the community,—to arm poverty against property, labor against privilege, and each class of life against its superior,"—are at least as wide-spread now as in 1799. Which conclusion shall we adopt, the philosopher's, or the statesman's? I have said that the premises are the same; but in fact repeal would be a greater evil now, than when it meant merely the "Restoration of the Heptarchy." The kingdom of Ireland, as it existed between 1782 and 1800, was an English plantation, governed despotically by those who were one in race, re-

<sup>1</sup> Canning, Parliamentary Hist., xxxiv. 236.

ligion, and education, with the rulers of England. The peril of Jacobinism was imminent when the resources of Ireland were in the hands of a loyal aristocracy. Will the risk be lessened by placing these resources at the disposal of Michael Davitt? These "modern Liberals," it is true, propose to train our future Chaumettes and Héberts "in the practice of civil virtue and political responsibility," by the immediate grant of local self-government. But we have had some costly experiments in political education lately in Ireland, — Lord O'Hagan's Jury Act, for example, — and we are not altogether satisfied with the "civil virtue and political responsibility" developed.<sup>1</sup> That such a scheme

<sup>1</sup> The working of the Poor Law is another good instance. Both writers complain of the *ex-officio* guardians. Under the original Irish Poor Law (1 and 2 Vict., c. 56), only a third of the guardians were *ex-officio*. The jobbery and incapacity of the elected members forced Lord John Russell to increase the proportion of *ex-officios* to one-half in 1847. Recent facts seem to show that Lord John Russell was not altogether wrong. "There were methods," said Mr. Sexton last year, "of increasing the expenditure of the landlords: for example, he knew of one or two cases in which tenants had been turned out by the action of the Property Defence Association; and he knew that the local boards of guardians were about to act upon another of the practical and suggestive notes of the honorable member for Wexford, for they were about to make liberal grants out of the poor-rates for the maintenance of those families; and half of those grants would fall upon the gentlemen who were maintaining this association. The other half would not fall upon the ratepayers to the fullest extent, because arrangements would be made by which the ratepayers would be protected

would accelerate a Jacobin purification of Ireland, is certain. That it would mitigate the catastrophe, is an assumption credible only on the merest "Liberal principles." Repeal of the Union would not now mean "the Restoration of the Heptarchy," but the official installation of Hobbes's "State of Nature" in Ireland. There is, indeed, nothing more remarkable in Irish politics than the increasing degradation of each successive disturbance.<sup>1</sup> A comparison of

from the full portion of their own moiety of the poor-rates." ["Hear, hear!"] The following table from the Times of Sept. 30 will show that this was no empty threat:—

## TRALEE UNION.

SUSPECTS' HOUSEHOLDS.			ORDINARY RECIPIENTS.		
Name.	In Family.	Am't per Week.	Name.	In Family.	Am't per Week.
		£ s. d.			£ s. d.
Stack . . .	7	1 0 0	Sheehy . .	3	0 3 6
Nolan . . .	5	15 0	Connellan .	3	1 6
Sullivan . .	6	15 0	Lyne . . .	7	5 0
Pott . . . .	3	15 0	M'Enery . .	4	5 0
Driscoll . .	2	15 0	Sullivan . .	2	2 6
Williams . .	3	1 0 0	M'Quin . .	4	2 6
			Egan . . .	2	2 6

The whole letter is well worth study, and gives a very pretty picture of the "civil virtue and political responsibility" of the elective guardians, when the *ex-officios* are got rid of. See also Mr. T. P. O'Connor's speech at Cork (Times, Dec. 18).

<sup>1</sup> See an able speech of Lord Malmesbury's, Hansard, cxc. 3d series, 1054; Feb. 24, 1868.

the hireling assassins, and the hireling champions of assassination, who work the movement of to-day, with the men of education and position who headed the rebellions of 1798 and 1803, is the best proof that the Imperial policy has not been barren. The rebellion of 1798 was led by a Fitzgerald. The rebellion of 1803 was the dream of an accomplished gentleman. Even the "Young Ireland" of 1848 could produce the "Nation" of Davis and Ingram. The "Irish World" embodies the intelligence and the cultivation of the Land League.

The reason of such a rapid degeneration is not obscure. Nearly a hundred years ago the wisest and greatest of all Irishmen told his countrymen how they should set themselves to secure the Catholics from the seductive vision of a "frantick democracy," and win them to the cause of constitutional rule. "If," said he, "the disorder you speak of be real and considerable, you ought to raise an aristocratic interest, that is, an interest of property and education, amongst them, and to strengthen by every prudent means the authority and influence of men of that description."<sup>1</sup>

Unhappily, the Irish Legislature took a different way. They admitted a shoal of Catholic peasants to the franchise, and continued the exclusion of Catholic gentlemen from Parlia-

<sup>1</sup> Burke, Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe, 1792.

ment. Men like Plunket and Canning<sup>1</sup> were not slow to see the mischiefs of such a course, but the bigotry of Parliament was immovable. By a strange irony, the admission of Catholic gentlemen to Parliament was at last achieved by that very agitation and menace against which Burke had desired to rear their "authority and influence" as a bulwark. The lesson of agitation had been taught. The people had learned to look for guidance and for victory, not to "the interest of property and education" amongst themselves, but to the delegates of a democratic convention.

The complete and rapid success of emancipation in conciliating the Catholic gentry shows the deep wisdom of Burke's policy. Had it been brought out as a whole, influence and authority must have been lodged in the hands of those who have long been perfectly loyal to the Crown. The delay of a generation between the grant of the franchise, and the grant of the right to sit in Parliament, fatally impaired the power of that order, through which alone, as

<sup>1</sup> See the speeches of Canning on the Catholic Emancipation Bill of 1821 (Hansard, iv. N. S. 1310), and the Unlawful Societies (Ireland) Bill of 1825 (Hansard, xii. N. S. 480), and that of Plunket on the Elective Franchise (Ireland) Bill of the same year (Hansard, xiii. N. S. 220). The last-named measure carried the principle into the region of practical politics, by disfranchising the forty-shilling freeholders from the date of emancipation.

Burke foresaw, the people could be reached. But in spite of all, the cause of loyalty has not failed in Celtic Ireland. "There is," in the words of a noble Irishman who is dead,<sup>1</sup> "a class in Ireland—a daily increasing class—which comprises within its limits men of all creeds, and of all shades of political and religious belief. It includes within its ranks all those who possess the land, who direct the industry, and who by their intelligence, character, and education, can pretend to guide any thing that is sound in the public opinion, of the country. The spirit of patriotism and love of country, as pure and as ardent as is to be found among any people in the world, animates their breasts. Their faces are not turned toward the west; for in their consciences they believe that every hope for their country or her advancement, for her welfare, her prosperity, and her liberty, is indissolubly bound up in British connection. They desire, and, what is more, they intend, that their sons should be, as they themselves and their fathers have been, sharers in your greatness and your glory, your freedom and your power. Their best and dearest hope for their country is, that the day may not be far distant, when . . . the whole mass of their countrymen may be brought to acknowledge,

<sup>1</sup> Lord Mayo, Hansard, exc. 3d series, p. 1392 *seq.*; March 10, 1868.

and in acknowledging to appreciate, the countless blessings that a free constitution pours on the heads of a loyal and united people."

This is the spirit with which the Union has filled the gentlemen of Ireland. They do not think themselves worse Irishmen for the love they bear to England. They estimate the abilities of the old race to which they belong, at least as highly as the patriots who would confine Irish talent to Ireland. But they do not wish to see these powers wasted. They are not eager to be the citizens of a Switzerland without a history, of a new and impoverished Belgium. They do not desire that the genius and the valor of Ireland should be again driven to choose between insignificance and banishment, between the parochial politics of College Green and a perpetual exile. They covet honor for their country, but the laurels they would have are to be won on "the arena of the world." Are we to be told that the policy which has gained over all educated Irishmen has failed? Lord Palmerston spoke of "the open and undisguised discontent of the Catholic gentry" in 1829.<sup>1</sup> Forty years later Lord Mayo found them, "to a man, thoroughly well affected toward British rule."<sup>2</sup> Why should we doubt, that, as education spreads, loyalty will spread too? Why should not the Catholic peasantry

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, xx., p. 1248.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., exc. 3d series, p. 1745.

abandon their discontent, as well as the Catholic gentry? But there is even evidence, and very remarkable evidence, that, at the date of Lord Mayo's speech, the constitutional spirit had made no inconsiderable progress amongst the people. "In the classes above the want of the immediate necessities of life," said Mr. Gladstone<sup>1</sup> in the same debate, "there has grown up, within the last generation, a sentiment of attachment to law and order, greater, more substantial, more lively, and more effectual with a view to the administration of justice, than has ever perhaps been known in former times." In 1868 the "interest of property and education" was at last beginning to tell upon the people. What evil principles have since paralyzed the "influence and authority" of that interest, it is for "modern Liberals" to explain. Mr. Healy irreverently suggests the ballot and the land movement. But the ballot and the Land Acts, we know, were "messages of peace," which have knit society together, and trained the democracy "in the practice of civil virtue and political responsibility;" not causes of a cruel social war.

The great and progressive results of Burke's policy, up to the time of Mr. Gladstone's first administration, seem to show that we who maintain "that it will all come out right after

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, cxc. 3d series, p. 1745.

a while" have had considerable grounds for our belief hitherto. We are even prepared, as the Secessionists complain, to "go on writing and speaking the same things into the next century if we are allowed." But we are beginning to feel that we may not be allowed. We have come to what we know is a crisis in the relations of the two kingdoms. England must now determine either definitively to abandon the Union, and enter upon the path which leads step by step to Secession, or to revert to the policy of Pitt and Canning and Peel and Disraeli, of Grey, of Russell, and of Palmerston, by resolutely turning her back on all schemes, great and small, which throw power into Secessionist hands. "The peril is instant: the decision must be instant too." Should that decision be favorable to home rule, the Secessionists will go on their way, undisturbed for the future by assurances that "it will all come out right after a while."

I have said, that, even if we believed secession would turn Ireland into a Switzerland or a Belgium, we should regret the change. But what are the prospects of such a growth? Undoubtedly there is a hearty sentiment of nationality amongst our race, but it takes something more than sentiment to make a nation. It is, we are very truly told, a delusion "to believe in a whole community being given over forever to the rep-

robation of social madness." But where is this community, this organized fellowship of classes, which is the very essence of a nation? Is it to spring full-armed from Mr. Healy's head? Or do "modern English Liberals," like the philosophers of the *Encyclopédie*, really fancy that they can make a "body politic," the slowest and the stateliest growth of time, by intrusting four millions of "men in the abstract," as M. Taine calls them, with the destinies of their country? They might as well expect a nest of jelly-fishes suddenly to develop a backbone. Our Irish race is no more a nation than a hundred thousand recruits are an army, or five hundred able-bodied seamen a ship's company. The natural growth of our people has been distorted and turned awry. The very success of Burke's policy amongst Catholic gentlemen has but served to complete the disintegration he deplored. A "great interest of property and education" has grown up and thriven amongst them. But it has not the "authority and influence" to dash "the wild and senseless project of those who do not belong to their body, who have no interest in their well-being, and only wish to make them the dupes of their turbulent ambition." The fact, that Catholic gentlemen feel the spell of English thought and English sympathies has uprooted whatever power over their countrymen they possessed. They are mere "West Britons," to

be driven out with the rest. The aristocracy is powerless. There is not, there never has been, a Celtic *bourgeoisie*. It is idle to talk of the "whole host of people in a middling condition of life, — the shopkeepers, the men of business, the larger farmers." There are many thousands of such men, steady, active, more than commonly intelligent. But there is no historic middle class, with its own vigorous tradition of respect for law, reverence for social order, contempt of menace, and resistance to oppression. The middling rank is no status in Ireland: it is a stage through which men travel, as they advance or recede in the social scale. It is a body eminently of waverers, of those who are sure to gravitate to the winning side. In the beginning of the agitation they resisted the League. When the Government abdicated, they transferred their allegiance. Now that the law is restored, they will support the law. They are the persons, whom, of all others, a prudent ruler would strive to win, and whom Government has of late done very much to lose. They are the men on whom modern Liberals rely to sweeten "local self-government"!<sup>1</sup> Have they sweet-

<sup>1</sup> "Day after day," says Mr. Forster in the speech already quoted, "as I went to my office, and took details of crime, I found out how utterly impossible it was to detect outrages. Then would come to me, not landlords, but respectable farmers, shopkeepers, and others, with cases, not of personal injury, but of pecuniary and commercial ruin, in consequence of Mr. Par-

ened the House of Commons? Is it the meek citizens who direct the Home-Rule vote, or the avowed allies of "Rory"? And if the "moderates" are bullied into excesses of which they are ashamed, where self-assertion would meet with the moral support of both the great parties in the state, what may they not be coerced to on the county boards of Munster or of Connaught?

We have, then, to deal with a population of peasants; a population, too, which has been of set purpose unfitted for the exercise of all political functions. The declared object of the penal laws was "to reduce the Catholics of Ireland to a miserable populace, without property, without estimation, without education; . . . to deprive the few men who, in spite of those laws, might hold or retain any property amongst them, of all sort of influence or authority over the rest. Are we to be astonished, . . . that, whenever they came to act at all, many of them would act exactly like a mob, without temper, measure, or foresight?" Certainly we should not be astonished. But we may be well astonished to hear responsible men talk seriously of purchasing a respite from worry for themselves by making this mob the rulers of Ireland.

nell's speech at Ennis. That speech began the boycotting system. The Irish Executive felt the reins of power falling from their hands." — *Times*, Dec. 8.

Many fear the English democracy. But they at least have received a long and wholesome education. They have worked their way to sovereignty by degrees, and in the process they have learned something of the perils of liberty. As power has gradually shifted from the privy council to the peers, from the peers to the squires, from the squires to the common lords, the electors of '32, the electors of '67, each class has taught moderation and restraint to its successor. The Irish electors have never known the discipline in the ways of freedom. They were serfs fifty years ago. They will be despots with home rule. They are no fitter to play the part of sovereign people now than the originals of Mouldy and Bullcalf in the days of the Armada.

But will England so surely find that ease for which she is bidden to barter away her empire? Will "a vestry for the parish of Ireland" satisfy Mr. Healy's aspirations for "the management of his own affairs"? Will home rule slake the hatred that glows in Mr. Sexton's fine speeches? Will independence itself sate the lust of vengeance displayed in every column of the "National" press? When we have heaped all this scattered enmity together, when we have suffered "self-government" to harry every West Briton out of Ireland, and home rule to fuse the new democracy together, what pledge shall

we hold of the enduring amity of the new state? Political gratitude? The resources of civilization will be, *ex hypothesi*, exhausted. There will be nothing to give. The fair promises of Mr. Healy? I do not like the security. There is no better to offer. Do the Radicals counsel their "utterly weary" countrymen to rely at last upon their big guns?

Was there ever a more desperate policy? We are warned not to "expect too much from any expedient whatever," and an impediment is straightway pressed upon us, which is admittedly ineffectual unless it involves, (1) the expulsion of all land-owners from Ireland; (2) the imminent risk of a degraded copy of the most degrading religious war in history;<sup>1</sup> and (3) protection — an expedient, too, which must almost certainly lead to a collision with this country. Only very modern Liberals can listen patiently to such proposals. And even if they were as safe to true liberty and to property as they are perilous to both, there is a reason which should itself alone determine England to refuse secession. To sever the Union is not only to destroy every prospect of the ultimate fulfilment of Burke's policy, by the natural increase of the authority and influence of "the interest of education," but to ruin the great work already ac-

<sup>1</sup> "A reduced and squalid version of the Thirty Years War, in Mr. Morley's own words."

complished in the growth of that interest itself. The silent, healthy formation of a cultivated Celtic opinion has been the noblest result of the Imperial rule. It binds us to England as no other tie should bind. She is to us the interpreter of the great thoughts that move the world. We have made her learning our own. We have enriched it with immortal names. Through her literature, our genius "has come upon the arena of the world." It is our ambition to spread this wholesome light amongst our countrymen. Here lies our ideal of a true Irish nation. We hope to see it grow—as all real nations do grow—a living, organized community, with leaders and thinkers and workers of its own, not a *causus*-ridden proletariat of peasants "exploité'd" by professional politicians. And we think, that, like the English and Scotch, such a nation will find ardent devotion to their own land perfectly compatible with pride in the great empire they have helped to rear and to adorn. But with the advent of "a frantick democracy" all this must end. Where the Jacobins cannot level up, they will trample down. They will "root up the laurels to plant potatoes;" and the wisdom of Silas P. Radcliffe—of those to whom loyalty is self-interest, and patriotism a trade—will reign supreme in the country of Edmund Burke.

# A DEMOCRAT ON THE COMING DEMOCRACY.

BY HENRY LABOUCHERE, M.P.

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AN insight into what is, and what is not, possible, distinguishes the practical man from the dreamer ; and, as it has been customary in this country for many a year to assume that democracy is an impossible form of government, all those who either advocate or predict its advent are dubbed dreamers. A dim consciousness is, however, stealing over many, that the impossible is becoming possible. It may enlighten them, therefore, to explain how those who avow themselves democrats propose to give reality to their "dreams," and what they hope for when democracy in these isles is no longer a "dream," but a hard fact. Before doing so, however, it is perhaps desirable to say a word or two upon our political past and present in their relation with our political future.

Up to the passing of the Reform Act of 1831, the aristocratic form of government, based upon the ownership of land, prevailed. The aristoc-

racy of broad acres were masters in both houses of Parliament. There were amongst them enlightened and patriotic men, who desired that the people should be well and fairly ruled; but any idea of governing by the people, as well as for the people, was alien from the political notions of the best of them. Occasionally a man not of the Brahmin class was admitted to power; but no sooner did he attain it than he was "permeated," and became a supporter of the prevailing system. Between Whig and Tory there was little real difference: indeed, the Tory of one day was the Whig of the other, and *vice versâ*. Whichever party was in power represented the *status quo*; whilst the opposition, in order to attain power, was perforce obliged to profess an ardent admiration for popular rights, not so much because it believed in them, as because the winning side could not act on them. The people were fed with phrases lauding the glorious constitution under which they lived, and, being occasionally allowed to indulge in the orgy of a closely contested election, were deluded into the notion that they, like the fly, turned the wheel that crushed them. Only on rare occasions, and when class legislation had reduced the people to the depths of misery and want, did any public opinion make itself heard.

The parliamentary advocates of the Reform

Act of 1831 were mainly actuated, in their support of this measure, by a desire to secure to the party to which they belonged a lengthy tenure of office. They fancied that by giving votes to the ten-pound householders, and by putting an end to some of the more scandalous of rotten boroughs, they would make the political balance permanently incline to their side. Just as Lord Derby subsequently passed a Reform Act "to dish" the Whigs, so did the Whigs in 1831 pass one "to dish" the Conservatives. Their action found favor with the middle classes, who were awake to the abuses which were rampant under the rule of the landed aristocracy, and were desirous to share power with it.

Their participation proved of great benefit to the country. Disloyalty and discontent were hushed. A vast number of men, hitherto political outcasts, were reconciled to the constitution. Much unjust and class legislation was swept away, and many sound liberal measures of reform were passed. The aristocracy, however, still dominated in the Executive, and still were far too powerful in both houses of Parliament. The middle classes, who had acquired the franchise, were Liberal rather than Radical, and even their liberalism was stronger in words than in action. They were at the same time jealous of and yet subservient to those socially above them, whilst they dreaded and disliked

those whom they regarded as their social inferiors. They were ready to make common cause with the aristocracy in refusing to extend the franchise to all who were not as they,—dwellers in a house rated at ten pounds, or at something more, per annum. Let us be frank: these ten-pound householders were in the main poor creatures. They had a keen knowledge of their own interests, but cared for little else. Respectability, “gigmanity” as Carlyle calls it, was their fetich; and no one who lived in a smaller house than they, or who labored with his hands, was in their eyes respectable. Their ideas revolved within a narrow circle, hemmed in with prejudices; and their minds were as narrow as this circle.

Their “social inferiors,” however, were no longer the ignorant, unthinking pariahs that they had been in 1831. They had been educated; they read and thought; they had their clubs and their associations; they had learnt their strength by acting together; they failed to regard as one of the most perfect systems of government that which excluded them from all share in the choice of their rulers; they demanded the franchise. The parliamentary Liberals were anxious to grant it to them, but for a considerable time the Conservatives and Whigs found means to render this impossible. The initiative was taken by Mr. Disraeli.

Whether he really believed in the existence of the Conservative workingman, and fancied that he would ally himself with the territorial aristocracy against the middle classes, or whether he only wished, like his colleague Lord Derby, to extinguish the Whigs, is not quite clear. It is probable that he perceived that the electorates established by the Reform Act of 1831 were in the main Liberal, and, without any close consideration of the subject, thought that his party might gain, but could not be in a worse position, by extending the franchise, and therefore gave votes to the workingmen, much as a gambler, who is losing with one pack of cards, calls for another.

At the first subsequent election the Conservatives were defeated, as the new electors — most of whom had always called themselves either Liberals or Radicals — voted for the Liberal candidates. At the second election the verdict was reversed. This was due, not to the workingmen going over to the Conservatives, but to the Dissenters sulking, and refusing to vote, as a demonstration against Mr. Forster, whose legislation in regard to education had displeased them. At the third election — that which returned the present Parliament — the Conservatives suffered an overwhelming defeat. For this there were many reasons. They had committed numerous mistakes, and their

“spirited” foreign policy had turned out unfortunately for them; Mr. Gladstone had taken the field, and in burning eloquence denounced them. Both of these were factors in the result, but comparatively unimportant ones. The Liberal victory was due to three causes: 1. That the Dissenters were ashamed of their abstention on a previous occasion, and came up to the poll; 2. That the provinces wished to show that London, which had thrown itself into the arms of Lord Beaconsfield, was not the entire country; 3. That Mr. Chamberlain had organized the masses by means of the caucus.

No sooner was the result of the election known, than an intrigue was set on foot amongst the official Whigs, to exclude Mr. Gladstone from office. They hated him. Unlike them, he was no mere aspirant to office: he was not likely, when he had attained it, to rest and be thankful; he was no coiner of words to conceal ideas; he had not merely professed a belief in popular reforms, but he believed in their necessity, and was prepared to insist on their adoption. The Whigs wanted a servant who would aid them to keep up the farce of promising every thing and doing nothing. In Mr. Gladstone they knew that they were more likely to find a master.

Unfortunately, however, Mr. Gladstone does not seem to have been aware of his own

strength, or he was perhaps unwilling to break with former political associates and with long-formed social ties. No sooner was he intrusted with the task of forming a government, than the Tadpoles and Tapers circumvented him. Peers, Whigs, and ex-ministers who had been pitchforked into former Liberal cabinets, surrounded him. He was not a young man. He succumbed, and formed his cabinet of the very men who had intrigued against him, and of the political hacks who had formerly been his colleagues. Had it not been for the determination of Sir Charles Dilke, not one single representative of the party that had been true to him, and had enabled him to triumph not only over Lord Beaconsfield, but over his former associates, would have had a place in his cabinet. As it was, the only Radical admitted to a seat was Mr. Chamberlain.

This gentleman's entrance into the cabinet was regarded as almost a revolution by the Whigs, and by the London clubs and London coteries, who, up to then, had regarded the choice of ministers as a sort of domestic matter, on which they alone were to be consulted. He had not been very long in Parliament; he belonged to no London clique; he had never held office; he was a provincial; he was an avowed Radical; he had organized the caucus—that baneful scheme which was destined to

enable constituencies to choose their candidates, and to restrain them if, as usual, they sought to break loose from their pledges. He was rich, it was true, and this was in his favor; but he had made his money in screws — so low, so common! he had been the mayor (a mayor!) of a provincial town; he had a vestry mind; he was capable of encouraging Mr. Gladstone in any attempt to emancipate himself from Whig guidance; his views in regard to the aristocracy, the landed interest, the monarchy perhaps, were not orthodox. All this, and much more of the same kind, those who thought that Mr. Gladstone had been tamed like the wild elephant, by being surrounded by trained animals, and who distrusted Mr. Chamberlain, sadly whispered.

Mr. Gladstone's cabinet may therefore be said to have consisted of two Radicals, — himself and Mr. Chamberlain, — and of a number of noblemen and gentlemen, who, whatever they may have termed themselves, were not Radicals; and the cabinet remains much what it was, except that Lord Derby, an ex-Conservative, and Sir Charles Dilke, a Radical, have joined it.

In the present Parliament there is unquestionably a stronger Radical element than in any previous one. There are more men than heretofore who not only avow themselves Radicals,

but whose Radicalism has been proof against the usual cajoleries that are brought to bear on those who profess this pernicious political creed. They, however, do not constitute the majority. On the ministerial side of the House the mass is composed of men who have got into Parliament by means of Liberal and Radical votes, but whose Liberalism is only skin-deep. Their aspirations do not go beyond a desire to tack M.P. to their names as long as possible, and a vague hope that one of these days they may either be made baronets, or given some little office which will secure to them an obscure seat on the Treasury Bench. These waiters on Providence are harmless for good and for evil. They consider that they will best serve their own interests, and best insure their re-election, if they give an unqualified and undeviating support to Mr. Gladstone, — not because they have personally any liking to him, but because he is the leader of the Liberal party, and they are the rank-and-file of that party. If Mr. Gladstone proposed home rule for Ireland, they would cheer him: if he resisted the proposal, they would equally cheer him. When Mr. Gladstone withdraws, they will cheer his successor with as hearty and vociferous a zeal as they have cheered him. They are party men. What may be termed the right section of the ministerialists is composed of men who

are in every thing, except in name, Conservative. Although their political views have little in common with those that former Whigs professed, they give themselves this designation, and are known by it. All told, they do not muster above thirty; but their influence is entirely out of proportion with their numerical strength. There are several reasons for this: they are in the main able men, and have established for themselves a prestige for eminent respectability. In the cabinet they are very fully represented, as well as amongst the minor official fry. They are not to be trusted; and, were they or their views to be ignored, they would at once intrigue with the Conservatives; and in all their resources of parliamentary tactics they are past-masters. It may be asked, why, being Conservative, they do not go over to the Conservative side of the House. They are not likely to do this until they are driven over. They find it far more advantageous to themselves to belong to a party in which they are given much in order to secure their allegiance, and where their presence leavens Radical resolves with Conservatism. Eminently respectable as they are, they cheerfully accept the part of traitors within the Liberal camp, and no doubt sincerely believe that the country owes them a debt of gratitude for so doing. They have, too, a most voracious appetite for

office, and take exceedingly good care to be handsomely paid for condescending to support a Liberal government. Although they act skillfully and compactly, their weakness lies in the fact, that, were they to vote against the Liberal leader upon any great party question, not one of those who does not sit for a pocket-borough would ever return to Parliament through Liberal votes. Knowing this, their aim is to emasculate Liberal legislation by means of artful amendments on bills in committee, to bring social pressure to bear on Mr. Gladstone, and to secure to themselves the lion's share of the "spoil." The left wing of the ministerialists numbers perhaps about one hundred, but of these probably not more than twenty are real democrats. It has been a matter of reproach to this section of the party, that they have not sufficiently asserted themselves or their principles in the present Parliament. In this, however, they are well advised. They are aware that the majority of the House, and indeed of the ministerialists, would not go one step farther on the Radical path than Mr. Gladstone; and that he has up-hill work to make head against the majority of his Cabinet, the social influences with which he is surrounded, and the Punic faith of the Whigs, who would turn against him the first moment that they could do so without danger to themselves. Moreover,

they have a hearty and grateful personal admiration for the old statesman himself, which, irrespective of political considerations, renders them loath to render his difficult task still more difficult. The Radicals in Parliament of all shades, therefore, bide their time, and leave Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Chamberlain free scope to pave the way for their inevitable, and not far distant, triumph. The Conservatives, as a parliamentary party, may, for all practical considerations, be said to have almost ceased to exist. They have no policy, and their official leaders are singularly wanting both in debating talent, and in skill to turn any mistakes which are made by ministers to their own advantage. Serious official opposition to the ministry does not exist. The leadership of the Conservative party seems to be in commission. Lord Salisbury in the Lords, and Sir Stafford Northcote in the Commons, pull in opposite directions; whilst the lieutenants of the latter, Sir R. Cross and Mr. Smith, although good men of business, are, like their amiable and respected chief, singularly wanting in those characteristics which enable their possessors to influence a large popular assembly. If the initiative of a free lance, which succeeds in dragging an inert mob into battle, denotes leadership, Lord Randolph Churchill indeed, rather than any occupant of the front opposition bench, is the leader of

the Conservative party; but his opposition does not go beyond indiscriminate criticism, and a persistent endeavor to stave off Liberal legislation by means of much talking. So far as can be judged from his utterances, Lord Randolph has some hazy idea of a Radical-Conservative party of the future. If so, it is most unlikely that the Conservatives will follow him. Putting aside a few hungrily loquacious lawyers and blatant youths, the party consists of worthy men, who, although misguided in their political views, honestly believe in them, and would not sacrifice them either for place, power, or success at the polls. The Irish have been alienated from the Liberal party, owing to the ill-advised Coercion Acts having dealt not only with the suppression of actual crime, but sought to render even legitimate political action impossible in Ireland. Although the "Kilmainham treaty" is a figment of Conservative brains, yet there is no doubt that the release of Mr. Parnell and his friends, coupled with the substantial recognition of the justice of their cause by the adoption of the Land Act, would have constituted a new departure in the relations of the Parliamentary Irish with the Liberal party, had it not been for some of the clauses in the second Coercion Act. That bill was, unfortunately, in the hands of Sir William Harcourt, who avowed himself a Whig,

nailed the Whig flag to the mast, and declined even to listen to any arguments in favor of any alteration in its worst and most oppressive clauses. The Irish — so long as this unhappy Act is in existence — will not aid Government with their votes, should any chance of a ministerial defeat arise. At the same time, they are sensible that Mr. Gladstone has done more for their country than any previous English premier, and nearly as much as he possibly could do. Whilst, therefore, they still occasionally fall out with him, their opposition has lost the virulence which characterized it during the first session of the present Parliament.

As the only specific engagement entered into with the constituencies by the majority of those elected at the last general election was, that they would vote in favor of a bill assimilating the county with the borough franchise, it may be presumed that this vital reform will be carried before the present Parliament is dissolved. Any scheme for a redistribution of seats ought, however, to be left to a Parliament elected on the larger franchise ; for the present Parliament would not treat the question in the drastic manner that is needed, but its action in the matter would be half-hearted.

We will suppose, therefore, that Parliament, after having given votes to the agricultural laborers, is dissolved. What ought then to be

the course of those who desire to democratize the constitution of the United Kingdom?

To break entirely with the Whigs, and to hand this *damnosa hæreditas* over to the Conservatives. Better, far better, that the Conservatives should for a brief period be in power, than that these emasculating traitors should any longer be tolerated within the Radical fold. This clearance would be effected by submitting certain test-questions to every Liberal candidate, and by every Radical refusing to record his vote for him unless they are satisfactorily answered. These questions ought to be clear, simple, and few in number, but thoroughly practical. If the instrument of legislation is not democratic, it is not likely that it will legislate in a democratic spirit. If democracy is the faith of the majority of the electors, they must take means to insure that it will also be that of the assembly that represents them. No Liberal candidate, therefore, should receive a democratic vote unless he agrees to support the following reforms.

#### ELECTORAL DISTRICTS.

As Mr. Disraeli once said, all modern legislation tends toward this end. Much from a Conservative standpoint may be urged against a franchise which is based upon giving a vote to every man who is not under personal disquali-

fication ; but if this be recognized as a right, it follows as a necessary consequence that the weight of each vote in the political scale ought to be equal. To grant a vote to all, is to evacuate the last defensive work at which democracy can be resisted. To attempt to stem the democratic flood by means of disproportion in electoral areas, is to endeavor to fight in the open country after the fortress has been surrendered and the guns spiked. It is simply childish, and it is difficult to understand how intelligent men can suppose it to be possible. To imagine that the masses, having been given the franchise, will allow themselves to be jockeyed out of it for the benefit of classes numerically infinitesimal, is much like opening the door to the Atlantic Ocean, and then fancying that its course can be directed with a broomstick.

#### ELECTORAL AND PARLIAMENTARY EXPENSES.

Sir Henry James has elaborated a bill which is intended to punish bribery and to reduce the cost of elections. The bill is drastic in the penalties that it provides for bribery, and so far is a good one : in its provisions respecting the cost of elections, however, it is open to much criticism. It re-affirms a property qualification for a seat in the House of Commons, by still permitting a heavy expenditure on the part of candidates, and by obliging them, as now, to

pay the fees of returning-officers, the cost of poll-booths, the salaries of poll-clerks, and other such outlay ; which there is as much ground to ask a candidate to meet, as there is to require him, when elected, to contribute to the amount requisite to light, fire, and keep in repair St. Stephen's. All this has but one object, — an insidious and an objectionable one, — to insure by a side wind, so far as is possible, that only rich men shall legislate for the rich minority and the poor majority. The cost of the entire machinery of elections must be thrown on the taxpayers, the expenditure of candidates at elections must be limited to a nominal one, and members of the House of Commons must be given a sufficiency to live upon from the public purse. In this way alone will the choice of constituencies be between all their fellow-citizens, and in this way alone will the majority of electors be represented by men who know their requirements, and who will insist upon obtaining them. The payment of members may seem a small matter ; but on it, more perhaps than on any thing else, depends whether the electors and the elected are to be henceforth in harmony.

#### DURATION OF PARLIAMENTS.

Three years is quite long enough for any representative assembly to exist without the electorates who have chosen its members having

an opportunity to renew or to withdraw their confidence in them. If an elected assembly sits for six or seven years, during the first half of its existence its members are too apt to stray away from their pledges, owing to the day of reckoning being so far off ; and during the latter half they are out of touch with the country. A septennial parliament crystallizes public opinion, and does not allow for its onward progress. Conservatives, from the nature of their political creed, desire to alienate electors from all real control over the elected, and from all genuine interest in public affairs, by rendering the opportunities to exercise this control infrequent. At the end of three years, either a member enjoys the confidence of his electors, or he does not. In the former case his position is strengthened by re-election : in the latter case, why should he continue to be the representative of those whose opinions he does not represent ?

#### THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

This branch of the legislature is composed of hereditary land-owners, who collectively own 14,258,527 acres of land, and whose collective incomes are about £15,000,000. They have persistently opposed, so far as they dared, every measure of reform brought forward during the present century, and more especially every measure that has militated against their own

class interests. Not only are they Conservative in the real sense of the word, but in the party sense. When a Conservative ministry is in power, they are useless: when a Liberal ministry is in power, they are actively pernicious. Notwithstanding their wealth, they are not independent. They are place-hunters: they are clamorous for decorations; and they dip heavily into the public exchequer. In pay, pensions, and salaries, they annually divide amongst themselves (including the salaries of the bishops) £621,336 per annum. It may be an open question, whether the system of one or two chambers is the more desirable. No sensible person, however, can advocate a chamber, destined to act with controlling impartiality, composed of enormously wealthy men, draining vast incomes from land, absorbing large amounts of public money in pay and pensions, and perpetually intriguing to secure the triumph of the party to which the great majority of them permanently belong. It is surprising that so astounding a legislative assembly as our House of Lords can have existed so long in a country inhabited by sane human beings; and its existence in any country where the paramount assembly is elected by a numerical majority would of course be out of the question.

The forces of democracy being thus organized, the traitors having been expelled from the camp,

and a legislative assembly having been elected which would be the direct reflex of the national will, we may anticipate that no time will be lost in bringing the country into line with the spirit of the age. What will follow, however, is too wide a subject to enter into in this article, although a few of the political and social problems, to the solution of which it will devote its energies, may be briefly alluded to. It is doubtful whether, even amongst democrats, the majority regard the issue between a monarchy and a republic to be within the realm of practical politics. So long as a monarch reigns, but does not rule, the question is an academical one. To democrats, whether the ornamental figure-head of the state be a living human being, a piece of painted canvas, or a gilt club, is a matter of exceedingly small importance in their eyes. Moreover, they recognize that the human figure-head has its advantages in a state such as ours, where the tie that unites the metropolis with its colonies is of the slightest. What they object to is the needless and foolish expenditure which is arbitrarily connected with the institution of monarchy in this country. The monarch and the monarch's family now cost about £800,000 per annum; and without any impeachment of the personal respect that is felt for the Queen, this expenditure is regarded, not only as excessive, but as one for which there is no more

inherent necessity than there would be to encircle the mace with strings of diamonds, were it, instead of an individual, our figure-head.

Democrats can conceive an hereditary monarchy such as ours without the abject ceremonial or the vast expenditure of a court. Much, indeed, of what is now voted to the monarch, goes to fill the pockets of members of the aristocracy and of needy courtiers. The monarchy assuredly is not bound up in the annual payment of £4,000 to a wealthy nobleman for walking backward with a colored stick on state occasions. In the United States the president receives £10,000 per annum, and lives in decent dignity, receiving all citizens who wish to pay their respects to him. Between this modest sum and the £800,000 which our royal family costs us, there is a considerable margin for retrenchment. It need hardly be said that the Established Church will at once be disestablished and disendowed. It is estimated that about £3,000,000 per annum might revert to the nation from this source, without injury to the rights of any individual. The money would be devoted to educational purposes. Religious equality is a cardinal article of the democratic creed ; and to make persons contribute, not only toward the cost of their own worship, but also toward that of another sect, is, in the opinion of democrats, a flagrant violation of religious equality. Under

a legislature where land-owners have been paramount, the object of law has been to vest the ownership of the entire soil in the hands of a few. Democracy will reverse this, and strive by legal enactments to vest it in the hands of many. Practically, occupiers will become owners, or, to speak more accurately, will exercise those rights which are now in the hands of non-resident owners. It may be, too, that a law will be passed limiting the number of acres that can be owned by any person who does not farm them. Such a law would have its political, as well as its economical, advantages ; for nothing can be more desirable than to break down the social prejudice which now attaches to the ownership of vast tracts of the national soil. Taxation will be based upon the excellent principle, that, a certain amount of money being required in order to meet the cost of government, those ought, in the main, to pay it who can best afford it. The sums that are now levied on industry by means of customs and excise will be raised by a progressive income tax and a progressive succession duty. It is very clear that no individual can want more invested capital than such an amount as will produce in interest an income sufficiently large to enable him to gratify all his real and all his acquired wants. More is surplusage, and the owner of this surplusage has no real right to demand that society should be

taxed to secure him in the possession of it. What can a man with a fortune beyond the very dreams of avarice do with his money? He has to compete in thousands with others as rich as himself for the possession of china cups and saucers, which may be intrinsically worth as many pounds, or he employs it in some other equally silly manner. Very large fortunes, as the Americans are learning, are a positive danger to a democratic state. To take from the individual all above a certain amount, however just in theory, might, however, have its disadvantages. To take one-half beyond the amount regarded as alike safe to the state and sufficient for the individual, would be beneficial to both; and fifty per cent might be laid down as the limit to which an income-tax should in any case extend. It may be said, that, in this case, accumulation would cease beyond the fixed amount. No harm would ensue if it did; but, as a matter of fact, it would not. Of course, right to raise money for local purposes now possessed by *ex-officio* magistrates would be at once swept away. The principles of local self-government, viz., imposition of local taxes by the representatives of all the inhabitants of the locality, and local control over expenditure, would be pushed to their ultimate consequences. We should have elected parish boards in each parish, just as we have now elected borough boards in the municipi-

pal towns. In each county there would be an elected county board ; and each board—county, municipal, or parish—would have full power over all matters which only affect its locality. The excellent system of local self-government which obtains in some of the New-England States might be adopted by us, almost in its entirety, with signal advantage. Thus the people, by being allowed to control their local affairs, would receive a political education, and be better able than now to realize the duties and responsibilities of citizenship. Local self-government also, in the fullest acceptance of the word, would be accorded to Ireland ; and in this way the long-standing grievance of the Irish would be removed.

These are but very few of the questions which would occupy the attention of a democratic legislature. Democrats are not such fools as to fancy that pauperism can be extinguished by law, nor that the difference between the lot of rich and poor will ever cease to exist. They indulge in no dream of absolute financial equality between man and man ; nor do they desire to interfere with the rights of property, although they might wish to put an end to the so-called rights of the few, when they involve the wrongs of the many. They would no longer permit the law to produce and perpetuate inequality, and be the servant of rich men but the master

of poor men. Wealth would be more equitably partitioned : there would be fewer very rich men, and fewer men struggling and striving for the barest necessities of existence. Thus the sum of human happiness would be more equally divided. Social distinctions would be dependent rather on merit than on birth or wealth. The public expenditure would be reduced to the lowest limit consistent with efficiency, and taxation would be properly apportioned. The resources of the country would be no longer squandered in wars to realize a wild dream of imperialism, or to secure to money-lenders the fruits of their spoliations. What is now a mere rhetorical phrase would become a reality : "The public affairs of England would become the private affairs of every Englishman."

That Conservatives, that Whigs, that great land-owners, and that millionnaires should regret the advent of all this, is conceivable. They have drawn a prize in life's lottery ; like Doctor Pangloss, they consider that all is for the best in the best of worlds ; they are convinced that legislation by them and for them is in accordance with the fitness of things. It has ever been so. An individual can seldom free himself from the illusion that a system is sound and good for all if it suits him. But between regretting that a thing will be, and believing that it will not be, there is a wide difference. Demo-

crats are told that they are dreamers. And why? Because they assert, that, if power be placed in the hands of the many, the many will exercise it for their benefit. Is it not a still wilder dream to suppose that the many will in future possess power, and use it, not to secure what they consider to be their interests, but to serve those of others? Did the land-owners act thus in England as long as they were the possessors of power? Can any instance be shown in history — except in Rome when votes were bought (and we are seeking in every way to render bribery impossible) — in which a democracy acted with such astounding abnegation? Is it imagined that artisans in our great manufacturing towns are so satisfied with their present position, that they will hurry to the polls to register their votes in favor of a system which divides us, socially, politically, and economically, into classes, and places them at the bottom, with hardly a possibility of rising? The school-master has been abroad. The artisan no longer is an ignorant, besotted beast of burden. He thinks; he reasons; he aspires. The poor village slave, too, the hewer of wood and the drawer of water, no longer regards his squire and his parson as beneficent beings, whose will is forever to be his law. Is his lot so happy a one that he will humbly and cheerfully affix his cross to the name of the man who tells him that

it can never be changed for the better? That democrats should rejoice over the coming future, is only natural; but that those who are not democrats should, *le cœur* as *léger* as that of M. Ollivier, do every thing in their power to pave the way for democracy by giving to all the franchise, and yet remain convinced that this will produce no fundamental alterations in our social and political system, is indeed surpassing strange. We democrats know that democracy involves great changes, and we rejoice at its advent because we desire these changes. We know that artisans and agricultural laborers will approach the consideration of political and social problems with fresh and vigorous minds, and will judge them on their merits, without being warped by any prejudice in favor of what is, because it long has been. We, dreamers! We, theorists! It is because we know clearly the end we have in view, and because we know by what means we shall attain this end, that we shall succeed. Constitutionally we mean to alter the constitution. Whilst Whigs, Conservatives, and moderate Liberals are actuated by the paltry ambition of appending Right Honorable to their names, and are quarrelling for the spoils of office, we look steadily to the triumph of our principles. For the moment, we demand the equalization of the franchise: we regard this as a step on the democratic path from which there is no turning

back. Our next demands will be electoral districts, cheap elections, payment of members, and abolition of hereditary legislators. When our demands have been complied with, we shall be thankful, but we shall not rest: on the contrary, having forged an instrument suitable for democratic legislation, we shall use it.

# A POLITICIAN IN TROUBLE ABOUT HIS SOUL.

BY THE HONORABLE AUBERON HERBERT.

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“For, what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

THE Irish Land Bill had just passed through committee in the House of Commons; and members were pouring out of the House, much in the fashion and temper of schoolboys released from school.

“Breakfast to-morrow with Angus,” said Geoffrey Lewin to a group of three or four other men, who, having secured their coats, were lighting cigars before dispersing homeward. Geoffrey Lewin was a young member belonging to the advanced Radicals. He had lived a good deal abroad: was well informed and well read; had worked hard and systematically at different subjects; was dry, clear, and positive in his views; and perhaps was rather more aware than was pleasant to his

friends, of the state of ignorance in which the world around him generally lived. He was a fairly regular supporter of the government ; of which he approved less for what it was in itself than for those future enlargements of the same policy, and those bolder governments, which he believed it would render possible. He had sympathies of an intellectually cultivated kind with the mass of the people, "grown in rather thin soil with plenty of manure," as one of his friends said : he believed in the dogma of a supreme government ; looked forward, to use his own words, to the establishment of collectivity ; and frankly avowed that he should belong to the socialist party in England, had the nation known enough of its own wants and beliefs to form such a party. The friends to whom he spoke were Angus Bramston, Walter Pennell, Lord Holmshill, and John Danby. Angus Bramston was a young member sitting with Geoffrey Lewin below the gangway, not very constant in his support of the government or settled in his political opinions, but occupied by many doubts and inquiries about all things in general and the Liberal party in particular. Danby had sat and grumbled for many years on the benches somewhere behind the government, gave them a vote on all the more important divisions, but was not supposed, by those who knew him well, to do it from any excess of loving-kindness toward them.

Lord Holmshill was another young member returned in the Parliament of 1874, — a Whig by birth and training, eldest son, and heir to large estates, but not overmuch wedded to these; looking with rather hopeless eyes on the present situation, and wanting as much in active desire to preserve an old order and avert changes, as in enthusiasm for the new things which were taking its place. Walter Pennell sat on the other side of the House, but thought and acted in a borderland between the two parties, occasionally voting with the Liberals, and well known by his friends to hope for the formation of a third moderate party as the remedy of all political evils. They were all intimate friends, bound by ties of different kinds to each other: none of them very strict party-men, but possessed of sufficient philosophy to discuss with great plainness of speech their own opinions and the questions of the day. Of them all, Geoffrey Lewin was the one who saw his own way the most distinctly, and knew, or professed to know, what he wanted. Angus Bramston's mental attitude was in strong contrast to that of Lewin. He was unsettled and tentative in his opinions, but was being constantly spurred on by a strong perception that there were great problems to solve, which could not be left without some definite attempt at their solution. He had had no intention of entering Parliament

for some years, but an accident had put him unexpectedly in possession of a seat. And now, being transferred from a life of watching others and comparing opinions, into a life of action, he was becoming aware of the mental difficulties which surrounded him. He had formed a strong opinion on the special controversy which occupied the constituencies in the 1880 election, and had been able without difficulty to give a clear answer in his own mind to the single questions, "Shall England view with favor, or with jealousy, the rising nationalities of the East? Shall she pursue an aggressive, or non-aggressive, policy abroad?" But he now found himself face to face with subjects of a different order, which, involving social reconstruction, could not fail to be full of perplexities and enigmas for philosophers still looking about for mental foundations, and were not made easier by the way, as it seemed to him, in which Mr. Gladstone and the party assumed that such a matter as an Irish Land Bill only required a well-balanced arrangement of details, and care that all the parts of the new mechanism should work without excessive friction.

Breakfast was finished, chairs were pushed back from the table, and cigars lighted.

"Have you been supporting the government lately in most of their divisions?" asked Walter Pennell of Danby, who, by right of prescription,

was occupying the most comfortable armchair in the room.

"Yes, always, whenever I voted."

"And yet you do not like the bill?"

"No, I don't like the bill: who does? It has almost every fault crowded into it that a bill could have; but I have supported it, and I suppose I shall support the Government if the Lords insist on having a trial of strength over it."

"That is the true Liberal way of going on! You hate the bill, and yet you support it. How can you defend such flagrant treachery to your own opinions?" retorted Pennell.

"Wait a moment," said Angus: "before he clears his character, let him first tell us why he does not like the bill."

"Why should you make me tell you?" answered Danby. "Pennell's friends have been telling you over and over again during the last few weeks, and most of the things they have said are substantially true. Except Argyll and Lansdowne, nobody could have said truer things about it than Gibson did. The bill is not a straightforward measure: it seems ashamed of its own meaning. It is a mass of complications; just as if Gladstone did not like it to be said that he was giving the three F's after having denounced them so vigorously in old days, and therefore he wanted both to do the thing

and not to do it, — in which difficult performance he can succeed better than most of us; and the greatest courage it shows is in its hypocrisy, since it sanctimoniously pronounces it a crime in the landlord to sell what he has got, at the best price he can get for it, — a crime which every trader and every workman, every person, rich and poor, Radical and Conservative, is committing every day to the best of his ability. Of course the object has been, to buy the tenants over from the Nationalists, and make them love the English Liberal party in return for certain practical advantages representing a considerable money value; and the whole machinery of these interminable clauses is little more than a piece of decorative work to hide what the Government cannot afford to put into plain words.”

“You are daubing on your black paint thickly enough,” interposed Bramston.

“My dear Angus, you are still in the age of innocency. Don’t you think,” went on Danby, “it would have been a simpler way of doing business, if the bill had only had one clause in it, to say that the Irish tenant, or whoever the tenant likes to put in his place, should pay for the next fifteen years to his landlord twenty per cent less rent, or whatever figure Gladstone chose to fix upon? Some forty words would have arranged the whole matter, and everybody

would have known what they were doing. Great heavens! Pennell, what a number of headaches it would have saved some worthy men on your side in trying to put together Gladstone's wonderful new puzzle of landlord and tenant! Our men were wiser: they never troubled themselves to understand any part of it. It is quite touching to see their faith in Gladstone when he is operating on an Irish landlord. But I suppose a bill of one clause would have had a brutal look about it, and would have shocked our dear respectable nation; and perhaps Gladstone, for the sake of his own feelings, likes plenty of conventional wrappings. The bill without any of its fig-leaves would have been called indecent, and even in the case of a landlord it is best to save appearances."

"Have you more to say?" asked Pennell.

"Yes, of course I have. There is no adjective expressing mental or moral stupidity which does not apply to some part of the bill. It has been bespattered all over by the praise of the Gladstone worshippers; but it is easy to see, that in messing over details, and entangling himself in contrivances to check this dodge of the landlord and that dodge of the tenant, Gladstone has never really faced the great underlying difficulty of the question. Everybody who keeps his common-sense in the matter asks, 'If there was over-competition for land in

the past, will there not be over-competition in the future? If the tenant was reckless about engaging to pay rent, will he suddenly, to suit Mr. Gladstone's political reputation, become moderate and prudent in buying the tenant's interest?' No attempt is made to answer this question. It is left to answer itself; and Gladstone simply buys off the Irish question for the moment with the landlord's purse. Of course some day the difficulty will return on his successor in an aggravated form. It is likely enough, when good seasons return, that under the stimulated competition for land the tenant's interest will become a millstone about the neck of the farmers; enormous sums having been recklessly spent in buying, and only a small part of the real value received. The true verdict on the bill will never be pronounced until that unfortunate successor of Gladstone has the whole mess to deal with again in another period of depression like the present; and then perhaps the nation will begin to learn what an expensive process it is apt to be, when political leaders have a genius for constructive legislation, and a fancy for putting feathers in their cap. But in any case it will end in a third slice being cut out of the landlord."

"But what would you have done?" asked Holmshill.

"Why, clearly," said Danby, "if you were to

have a bill of this kind, which is a large question in itself, as it was a case of disputed rights, you should have arranged for the tenant buying up at a fair value such of these rights as were most necessary to him ; as, for example, the ownership of all improvements. You could not do the tenant a worse turn than simply transferring to him rights by Act of Parliament. He will think for the next twenty years that it is both more profitable and more amusing to be a politician than to follow his own dull trade of butter and cattle growing."

"What I am half puzzled and half angered about," said Bramston, "is, why we have been legislating for so many months about the tenant, and have done nothing for the laborer. I dare say we are wrong in all we have been doing ; but if we are to help anybody, the laborer ought to have the best claim. He is certainly the most down in the world."

"I fear you are the freshest of young men up from the country, Angus," said Danby. "What has the laborer to give Gladstone ? He has not got a vote ; he is not organized ; he has not even learnt how to shoot at the tenant ; our newspapers and the English public are scarcely aware of his existence ; and at present he has not been quoted, and is quite without value in the political market. Rightly or wrongly Heaven only knows, the Government calculate,

that, if the tenants can once be detached from the National party, they will keep the laborers in order. So the laborer may be left for the present to stew in his own juice. Had you watched Gladstone as long as I have done, you would know that he never buys stock except in a rising market. When once he buys, then he buys boldly. He is always a little slow at first, but he never lets the market slip. You may be quite content, if ever the Irish laborer is worth looking after, our political leaders will take him in hand."

"But as the laborer is at present," said Walter Pennell, "it was like wringing blood from a stone, to get any thing from the Government for him. When he pressed for something to be done for him, the other night, the Government almost had a relapse of political economy."

"Ah! I remember that your party was in a very philanthropic mood that night," remarked Danby. "They always are whenever the Government is in difficulties. If Gladstone succeeds in nothing else, he will have succeeded in teaching your party some very sound views. If ever they let me write his epitaph, I will duly record the amount of your debts to him. You have already learnt to believe in freedom of contract, and to love the Irish laborer. My own belief is, that Gladstone has done more for your mental development in a twelvemonth than Dizzy did in a lifetime."

"I can't flatter your party by saying they have learnt from anybody," said Pennell. "They show more aptitude for unlearning than learning just at present. But have you other faults to find with the bill?"

"Other faults?" said Danby. "Why, the whole thing is made up of faults. Gladstone has gone out of his way to give the Conservatives the best of the argument throughout the whole session, and has left the Liberal party and himself nothing but the dirty end of the stick. And after it all we are not going to succeed. Of course the Irishmen will take all that they can get out of the bill; and for three or four years there may be a lull, if Mr. Gladstone keeps his temper, and does not put Parnell too often in prison. But the lull won't last. Every sick man in a fever has his quiet moments, whilst he is getting up steam for another outburst. In Ireland it is just the same: first a lull, then an outburst, then a heroic remedy; always the same series, in the same order. And I think we have some right to complain of our party-managers. As they were determined to go in for national bribery, they might as well have managed their delectable business successfully. But I see no sign that the Irish are less inclined to spit in our faces after the bill than before it. As they can see exactly how much our generosity at the landlords' expense has cost us, I think their want of

gratitude to the Liberal party does credit to their intelligence. But why should I give you a second-reading speech? You know all the moral and economical lies we have been telling this session, and so does everybody else; and so would Gladstone himself if he were not stung with a gadfly about any new matter he has in hand, to the utter exclusion of all other considerations, and their banishment to the farther planets."

"We'll forgive you the second-reading speech," said Bramston, "if you will now make your own confessions, and tell us why you have supported the bill."

"Well, that wants very little answer," said Danby. "I don't see anybody offering any thing else. Everybody wants something done, but nobody on one side or the other tries to see distinctly what should be done, or, if he sees it, has the courage to put it into words. We all blame Gladstone; but we all have a sneaking belief that we have got to swallow Parnell in some form or another, and the country seems to like the Gladstone sauce as much as any other. If we were not all of us given over, body and soul, to quackery and the medicine-men; and if we were not always being driven, like a herd of slaves, by our political necessities along the road which we like the world to think that we choose of our own free will and choice; and if—great-

est of all ifs — there were any party that spoke the truth, served the truth, and tried to save its own soul,—why then, perhaps I should not have voted as I have done. But I suppose I am philosopher enough to see, that political parties are about as anxious to know and follow what is true as the churches are; and I suppose I have been in the House long enough to see, that when our leaders are in the higher regions of their eloquence on the subjects of justice and generosity and all the other virtues, they are only doing their best to win the odd trick for the party. There may be some shades of difference between parties; but a politician of any party nowadays would have to make as wry a face as Thomas the Rhymer did, were he offered the gift of ‘the tongue that can never lee.’ To cheat himself about his own motives, is his first necessity, if he is to succeed. And so, you see, *faute de mieux*, I support the Government. What other choice is there? As for all the eloquent speeches we have heard from Pennell’s friends lately, they are true enough; but I want to know how long those who make them will care for us to remember them? What greater reality is there in the eloquence of one side than the other? Who ever heard of Pennell’s party believing in free contract, or free trade, or peasant proprietorship, or any other sensible sort of a thing, unless it were to buy

off something from the hands of the enemy that they were afraid of losing? Their political virtue, of whatever kind it is, is always the child of necessity, and never outlives the special moments which called it into existence. How much political economy shall we hear, do you think, from Gibson, when Pennell's friends return in two or three years to power, and Chaplin, as the new minister of agriculture, is dishing Mr. James Howard as Gladstone has dished Pennell?"

"I admit something of what you say," replied Pennell, "about our side. As we are at present, we are ceasing to be the stupid party, only to be the dodgey party. The absurd thing about the whole of the present matter is, that a mere chance would have reversed the parts that we have each played this session. Had Dizzy lived, and had he remained in power, it is likely enough that our party would have been dealing with the Irish question, and that all the moral and economical and common-sense speeches would have come from your benches. What a picture Gladstone would have given us, of the tenant called away from his sober industry by the political bribes flaunted in his face! what tempests of denunciation he would have poured on our heads for offering him a new and royal road to property! I am often tempted to despair about ourselves. Our misfortunes seem to do

us no good : they give us no steadiness of purpose ; we show none of the better qualities which belong to minorities ; our highest aim seems to be to make a damaging speech against Gladstone, — and how can you damage a man whose supporters are all caucused ? — or to make some new combination, some flank movement, or do some clever sleight-of-hand. Our leaders are always ready, at a moment's notice, to pour out any quantity of criticism, as if they were engaged to do it by the piece, and they are good enough to throw in a certain number of epigrams for us without charge ; but even the epigrams, when we get them, only seem to leave us in much the same unimproving condition of mental health after as before. Of any distinct leading, of any attempt to rally the party to definite opinions, to touch our reason and redeem us with a faith, — of these things there is no spark to be seen in our darkness. All that happens is material for party criticism, and nothing more. But low in the world as we are, I still hope more from our men than from yours. There is an incurable 'sand-the-sugar and come-to-prayers' snuffle about your Government, which they share with the grocer of pious and practical habits. I suppose you can't help it ; and perhaps some day, when you are all republicans and atheists, and are no longer half ashamed of your own opinions, and are not

trimming between two or three sets of supporters, you will get rid of it. But I want to know how Lewin has been voting lately. — Have you supported the Government, Lewin? and are you glad that the bill is so far safe?"

"Yes," replied Lewin, "I voted steadily for the bill. I don't say that I like its shape, but it goes in the right direction. Of course the bill is a bit of cumbersome machinery, which was to be expected, considering the ecclesiastical-metaphysical machine-yards from which it came; and I don't expect it to last even half of the time that the much-praised and little-performing machine of 1870 lasted. However, you may throw all the hard names at it you like, and most of them may be just enough, — I don't know, and I don't care, — still, depend upon it, long after the checks and counter-checks, dodges and counter-dodges, cease to mean any thing, and have been sold off as old iron, the principle that is in it will remain, and bear its fruit: I mean, that Government is a bigger thing than the landlords, and can remodel all havings and belongings, all rights of property and all social arrangements, as it thinks best. We have got to come to this, and we have taken one right good step at least toward it. The bill is probably all you say; but perhaps you forget that the metaphysics in it are not only the necessary product of an age of confused intelligence, but

are specially adapted for spreading a useful mist round the changes that are taking place, and preventing our seeing too clearly what we are doing: they are therefore by no means altogether useless. The great function of a Liberal leader at the present moment is to lead us just as we are going, without making us aware, or even without being aware himself if possible, of the true readings of the compass. The present is essentially a transition moment, requiring very delicate adaptations; and in Gladstone we have probably found the suitable instrument, just as other times have produced other leaders who were exactly fitted to their special circumstances. Everybody can see that three hundred years of Protestantism were a preparation to help us to pass from a superstitious state to a rational state of mind; and Gladstone, like the Protestants, is making the same transition easy for us in social politics. We wanted at that time a race of theologians sufficiently irreverent-minded and sufficiently enterprising to break up the old authority, but not so logical, or consistent, or thorough-going in their views as to be tempted to travel in one day's journey to the end of the new road that was opened before them. Men of greater mental hardihood, who would not have overleapt one formula to stop in front of the next, would have spoilt the slow preparation that was wanted, perhaps would

have ended in refixing the old fetters upon us. It is the same in social politics now. We want a transition leader who can reconcile us gently to the inconsistencies of thought and action that are involved in the changes we are making, and that would startle the world if the passage from the old to the new were abruptly made. Were I given the task to describe the kind of leader most suited to the present moment, I should say that he must be confident in his own constructive enterprises, committed to a policy of satisfying wants and difficulties as they arise, fitting into the English habit of mind of not looking beyond the twenty-four hours as regards the further consequences of an action, with a reputation that he cannot afford to lose for being the people's friend, with a dash of the political spendthrift about him, fluid in character but powerful in impulse, and, whilst ready to devote superabundant powers with enthusiasm to the movements which the people force upon him, always abiding by Frederic Harrison's precept of using the old terms to which we are accustomed, so that we may get as few joltings as possible in our passage from the old to the new beliefs. I have a perfect faith in natural selection producing for us in politics, as in every thing else, the instrument which is wanted; and whenever I listen to Gladstone lubricating for the English middle class the process of stripping

the Irish landlord, I feel the same thrill of delight that watching the apparatus of an insect-eating plant or any other bit of beautifully adapted machinery gives me. The co-ordinations in the political world are fully as perfect and admirable as those in the plant and animal world."

"I don't know whether to envy you," said Angus, "or to believe that you also are of those who know nothing about their own direction. You are always satisfied and contented with whatever happens; you always see yourself one step nearer the end which you desire; you tell us quite plainly what that end is: but still I cannot help asking myself whether your plain words really make you see any plainer. When Government has passed its last Land Bill, and performed its last operation on the landlords; when what you call collectivity is fairly established, and when we are all under its direction, — is not that only the beginning rather than the end of things? How do you know what form the will and pleasure of the collective agency will take? Have you the least idea on what principles, by what methods, it will act? Have you even distinct wishes as to what it should be? If you have not, are you not as much obeying forces as Gladstone is? perhaps deceiving yourself a little more than he does, since you set up a claim to know clearly what you mean,

and Gladstone, as Danby says, has never yet had time, with so many speeches to make and so many bills to pass, even to consider whether he does know or does not know what he means. I cannot see that it helps us much, to know that we are being carried nearer the collective agency, unless we are told what kind of a thing it is to be."

"Your challenge is fair enough," said Lewin, "but I don't intend to attempt to reply to it. To answer such questions as you propose, would require that I should know the secrets of evolution. The little marsupial of a few inches long, that lived at the time of the Purbeck beds near Swanage, might have told you what he thought was best for himself; but he could not have told you what would be best for the great race of mammals who were to tread so closely in his small footsteps. I can only say that to me the collective agency is the best instrument for general happiness; that it is better that people should agree by a majority as to what they want, and then proceed to carry it out, than that every man should be ceaselessly laboring to fashion his own muck-heap after his own special fancy, or to make it a little broader or longer than his neighbor's. That is all I can tell you. Collective agency seems to me a better agency than individual action; and the work of modern politics is to accustom the mind of all classes to

the idea. Without agreeing in all details with Karl Marx, I agree far more with him than with Gladstone. But I should greatly prefer Gladstone as prime minister under our special circumstances. Marx would do us infinite harm. Gladstone does as much good by involving all that we are doing in general indistinctness. He is always the last man to be convinced of the step which he is taking; and, when convinced, the most fervent in expounding the necessity under which he is acting. There is no finer method for sapping settled convictions. His regrets and hesitations, his appeals to the principles he is overthrowing, his skilful handling of the old familiar phrases, and his perorations in which democratic sentiment, religion, communism, and conservatism are all mixed up together, are a work of art which none of you sufficiently understand to admire as you ought. But even Gladstone, I think, would fail in disguising what wants disguising, if it had not been for the sort of theology on which the nation has been fed over so long a period. An ordinary Englishman cannot think unless he has a certain amount of fog hanging about his brain. There is no shrewder or more capable class than our well-to-do English Dissenters; they are the money-makers of the nation: but in politics you can do almost what you like with them, if you only tickle their ears with the right

sort of words to which they are accustomed in their chapels."

"Here is Bramston asking you for bread," said Danby, "and you only give the poor fellow a stone. Is this wretched pittance of information all you have to offer us? Have you no picture to give of the life we are all to live, and the happiness we are all to enjoy, when you have established the collective agency? We want to hear some practical details: we want to know, now that we have started with government inspectors to direct us in all that we do, and Irish Land Bills for turning tenants into owners, if we are to arrive in due course at state ownership of all instruments of production, and state employment for everybody. Please to tell us if any class or if any persons are to be allowed to exist in independence of the Government: is everybody to receive an official salary for what he does? or perhaps I should say, in the case of the idle and unprofitable people like myself, for what he does not do. Are we still to live, each man under his own fig-tree, or are we all to club together under one family roof? may I suggest corrugated iron to the collective agency as a cheap and expeditious way of roofing us all in? Are we still to be allowed to marry when we like? or are we only to become happy fathers of families when we can get a certificate of collective agency permission? You are a very

uncommunicative prophet of the new faith. Please do something for our conversion, by telling us a little more of your new kingdom-come ; and especially of the methods by which you propose to extract a week's work — in return for the payment you are so generously going to give, I believe — from five such ornamental and useless members of society as have just been breakfasting together in this room."

"All such questions are simply idle," said Lewin. "Were I to try to answer them, I should only use words, and cheat myself as much as our present leaders cheat themselves. There is no man living who can tell you what the collective agency will do. It will probably, as everybody can see, be protective in its nature at first ; but when society has once been remodelled, and a new start given to every one, what form of protection it will develop afterward, or whether it will be protective at all, can only be answered by guess-work. All that I can affirm is, that it is best for men to act as an organized body ; for them to agree on what they consider happiness, and then to carry it out by organized means. It is the natural tendency of human nature, to make use of the collective power ; and therefore it is wise to recognize its use in the most complete form possible. It is the greatest of human forces ; and to tell men to live in its presence, and yet not to use it, is like telling

them that the forces of steam and electricity surround them on all sides, but must not be employed in their service. But to tell you what men will consider happiness when they are free to construct it, is not a task I pretend to undertake."

"Well," said Danby, "we are all of us very much disappointed. I am of opinion that we are not going to be better off under the new than we were under the old leadership. If I try to interpret Mr. Gladstone, there are many volumes a year to read; and I confess that what the sum total amounts to in the matter of spiritual guidance, how much or how little it all means, lies altogether beyond my powers of discernment. I may at once confess that I have not the least idea where I am to be led this year, next year, or any other year. I do not know, as I follow my leader, whether I shall remain a free-trader, or shall develop into the brilliant discoverer of some new form of protection; whether I am the column and support of Established Churches, or their declared enemy; whether I am going to back the Lords, or give them a sly kick if occasion serves; whether I am going to construct a new system of state education that is to begin with the babies and end with the graduates, or whether I believe in letting people educate themselves; whether I am going to enlarge our system of poor-law relief,

and generously offer free-living to all who wish for it, or whether I shall be rigidly virtuous and economical, and take my stand on the House and nothing but the House; whether I am going to let Mr. Parnell take his coat off as many times as he likes in the day, and welcome, or whether I am politely going to give him my best help in putting it on; whether I am in my inner consciousness an Imperialist, or a Federalist, or a Separatist; whether I abhor blood-guiltiness, or am on the side of the Queen's authority; whether I am the friend of the English tenant, or of the English laborer (I am quite clear, for the moment, that I am dead against the landlord); whether I am going to present the public with new wines from Spain and Portugal and perhaps some other part of the world, or whether I am going to fine and imprison some thousands of my countrymen for wishing to take a glass of beer; whether I am going with the doctors for vaccinating and registering the people, or whether I shall throw doctors and registers overboard, and support the liberty of the subject; whether I am going to preach economy, and save the public money, or whether I am going to enter on a career of constructive enterprises, and spend with both hands. This year I have been the apostle of peace, and pledged to nationalities and moralities: next year I expect to be marching shoulder to shoulder with the Jingoës into

the heart of Africa, annexing the Congo, and placing Bartle Frere on a black throne. I am quite humble-minded in the matter : I bear myself like a weaned child ; I am quite conscious that I have no knowledge as to what my own opinions and actions will be for any five minutes in advance of the present moment ; and I have long ago given up the effort to make any connection between our mental zigzags of to-day and our zigzags of yesterday. Many years of practice and some philosophy have at last brought me into this state. But when a young prophet invites me to strike out a new path, and, with himself as my leader, says quietly, ‘I know absolutely nothing,’ as if that were the best way to inspire me with sufficient confidence to leap after him into all the dark holes for which he seems to have a fancy, I may be excused for doubting if I shall not be as comfortable where I am.”

“Don’t mind Danby,” said Bramston : “he is only digesting his breakfast, which never agrees with his temper. Go on, Lewin, with what you were saying.”

“There is not much more to say,” said Lewin. “The rule of the majority is the principle that is being evolved at this moment of the world’s history : it is the principle of the future, by which the world’s destiny is to be definitely shaped ; and it is already running its course be-

fore our eyes. The majority, with all their wishes and wants, are learning to give some real effect to their rule. And whatever phrases the party-leaders of the day may use, whatever credit they like to take to themselves for their Land Bills and social constructions and generous gifts, you may look on these little bits of ingenious statesmanship as the first blind acknowledgment of the force that is acting upon us all. All our phrases make no real difference to the fact, that, whatever the majority thinks adds to their happiness, that henceforward they intend to have or to do. This is a fact, which, if you don't yet see, you had better all of you see as quickly as you can; and then perhaps you will understand why I vote for a bill that I don't take the trouble to defend from Danby's attacks, that creaks and groans in all its cumbersome parts like a Spanish peasant's cart, and of which the one merit is, that in unsettling every thing, and settling nothing, it accustomes one part of the people to want and to ask, and the other part to give up the bone to their bigger brother; and this is conveniently done without the use of too much plain language. Perhaps you all suppose that there is a reality in the distinctions which our intelligent Liberal spokesmen like to draw between land and other kinds of property. Yes, there is a distinction; but it is not the metaphysical one which they draw so glibly and to

their own self-content. The distinction is, that land is the most visible, the most easily seized, the most easily divided up, and the worst defended, of all kinds of property. It is exactly fitted to the first meal, and when eaten it will leave a noble appetite for the other more difficult morsels. *Vive l'appétit!* Perhaps you all comfort yourselves by repeating what those same intelligent spokesmen are always telling us, — that in England there is a stronger belief in property than in other countries. My own suspicion is, that England will be the first country to try a real experiment in socialism; not simply because property lies in few hands, but because our people have such an infinite faculty for covering up and disguising what they do with words. If only the words are right, they are quite satisfied. Once call a thing by a good name, — no matter what it is, — christen it in public as a just and generous measure, and the English people will be enthusiastic in its behalf. Do you remember Elmore's French cook, who used to say that he could turn horseflesh into woodcock if you let him make the sauce? Well, Gladstone is quite as good in his own way. I should consider him the equal of the French artist if the English nation had not a certain natural aptitude for being led by the nose. Criticism of all kinds is an unknown art in this country; and, so long as there is plenty of political seasoning,

our people are always satisfied. In other countries men like to taste and know what they are eating: they would not stand the emptying of the pepper-pot into their dishes; and if Dizzy with his turgid patriotism, and Gladstone with his conventional morality, have succeeded with us, they have owed their success to the fact that the English are by nature predestined to fall into the hands of the word-makers. I know no place where the faculty exists in the same perfection as it does in England, of seeing in a thing not what it is, but what it happens to be called. Without such a faculty, that special British product which we call cant, and for which I defy you to find a name in other languages, could hardly have become one of the national facts. But it plays a great part with us, and, when rightly understood, seems to be a very useful sort of thing in politics. English cant is a study in itself; and it would be worth the while of any of you to watch some of its forms, and put together an article about it for the 'Fortnightly.' "

"Please not to be in such a hurry to reform us," said Danby, "out of cant. Until the collective agency is established, I doubt if we can get on without it. What you call cant is the oil that eases the working of all social and political wheels. If I am asked to subscribe to a popular charity, I do not say to the individual

who asks me, 'Your charity exists to give its secretary an occupation, and to amuse a certain number of unemployed persons in spending the money of other people;' but I say, 'My dear sir, I have a great respect for your charity, and the excellent work it is doing, and the unselfish manner in which your commiteee devote their time to it; and I only regret that other calls upon my limited means do not allow of my subscribing.' Perhaps you would like all of us, whenever we open our lips, to indulge in a stream of crude verities. Perhaps you would like the Liberal party to stand in a palace of truth at noonday, and say, 'Not one of us in a thousand are either Irish or English landlords, for matter of that; and we are quite prepared, therefore, to pinch the landlord to any extent if it is convenient to do so;' or for Gladstone to say, 'Prime ministers must live like everybody else; and if it is necessary for me to offer up my only son Isaac to the wants of the country, I shall know how to find good reasons for doing it.' I can hardly think that would be an improvement on our present method. You say we are an in-  
• artistic, uncritical nation. I say we know how to admire a thing whenever it is thrown into the right form. When Gladstone has to explain why he is sacrificing some principle, and paints the struggle of conflicting tides in his bosom, both the House and the country instinctively

feel the touch of the artist-orator, and exclaim, 'There! you see how unwilling he has been to act, how necessary it is for his mind to look on both sides.' Are we not right on both sides? Why should we not make disagreeable things as pleasant as we can? Here is Holmshill, if you only let him alone, and give him enough speeches of Gladstone's to listen to, not only ready to vote away that respectable Upper House, into which some day he will have to retire for his pre-prandial doze, but to make the tenant-farmers owners for life of all those pleasant farms over which we shot partridges last year; or to sacrifice his farmers, and vote it all in a lump for the laborers, with the Towers, I suppose, as a superior kind of workhouse. Why not leave him to vote himself out of existence, without even enough pain to know that he is doing it? Why should we shock him with plain words and disagreeable explanations as to what he is doing? He is much happier as he is."

"That is what I complain of," said Pennell. "I don't quarrel with Geoffrey Lewin. He dreams of his collective agency; and I only hope to heaven it will make him as uncomfortable when it comes, as it will make the rest of us. But Holmshill and all his Whig friends are the disgrace of the age. Was there ever a tail to a party so pitifully bedraggled? Here are men with really great traditions, who once

thought for themselves and led the country, and who now are hanging on to a party they dislike and dread, for the sake of the crumbs that are thrown to them. And, if you ask them why they take the kicks and the half-pence, they will tell you that they hope to check the Radicals, and to keep an influence over Gladstone; or they point to some half-dozen words in some clause or other, in some bill or other, and say, 'See how we have succeeded in modifying legislation;' or they appeal to this or that great Whig in the cabinet, and ask you what danger can there be as long as he remains in the government to represent landed interests. It would be fatal, they say, to separate ourselves from the Radicals when they might rush into any folly without us, and when we can always have a duke or two, or three or four peers of our own, in the cabinet. They don't see that their duke or their earl or their somebody is a sort of decoy-creature, which the other Liberals think it worth while to keep with a special view to them. One of my friends has had great trouble with rats. He has now invented a large wire cage, in the inner part of which he always keeps two or three tame rats feeding on the things which are dearest to the soul of a rat. All the other rats are so moved by the spectacle of their friends enjoying themselves, that they walk cheerfully into the outer part of the cage, from which,

except into the white terrier's jaws, there is unfortunately no return. My friend is full of practical benevolence toward the two or three rats who are kept in the inner sanctuary, and lets them live on the best of food in return for the service they render him ; but I scarcely know if he loves them for their own sake, and will continue to feed them when there are no more of their fellows to catch. You are an honest fellow, Holmshill, and don't care a straw for office ; but the real truth is, that the rest of the Whigs are the crumb-eaters of the Radicals, and, if they had a little honest pride left, their meal would choke them. And, as for Danby, whatever he may choose to say, he knows well enough it is true."

"My dear Pennell," said Danby, "please tell us what the Whigs are to do if they get out of the nest. We know that you are ready to form a party with them ; but, then, they are ungrateful enough to hesitate about the advantages of your offer. Don't be angry, Holmshill, if your admirer is a little unreasonable. As we all know, he loves you Whigs better than all the rest of us put together, and it is only disappointed affection which makes him a little bad-tempered."

"I'll forgive him," said Holmshill : "it is easy enough to abuse the Whigs. I don't say, and I don't think, we are doing the best thing possible ; but it is hard to say what we ought to do. There

are few of us who believe enough in what we have, to fight very desperately for it. We all feel that things are slipping. We all know well enough that we are not in the country what we were twenty years ago, and we shall not be twenty years hence what we are to-day. I suppose we can guess that the principal service our presence in the government does to the party is, as Lewin says about Gladstone's phrases, to disguise the changes that are taking place, and make every thing more decent. I suppose we shall stick to the party as long as any sort of possible excuse remains for our doing so. We have been, like Lewin's Protestants, a useful sort of stop-gap between the old and the new; and probably they will let us keep Hartington, or somebody else like him, in the cabinet till the end of it all, to satisfy our little vanities and pacify our little irritations. It is not very grand, or very independent; but I doubt if it is wholly meanness on our part. It is true that it would not be a profitable political investment for us to set up on our own account; but, even if it could help us, there is, I think, a sort of honorable shame which would prevent our doing it. It is difficult to forget that we took our stand in old days, for better or worse, on the principle of 'all for the people, by the people;' and even when the principle is made to cover measures that have less regard for justice than for party

convenience, we have a silent feeling that we are like so many others who have to reap what they once sowed. We can hardly begin to protest against the principle on the very first day and in the very first hour that it goes against our own interests. Remember, also, that we are entangled and impeded by an exceptional position. Had there been no favors and privileges in old days, I suppose that the Towers and myself would have had little enough to do with each other; and it is these favors and privileges which make it seem ungenerous to oppose demands made in the name of the people, even when I think that they are founded on wrong principles and likely to end in disappointment. Perhaps I may see faults in a Land Bill as well as you; but I cannot come down to the House as easily as you can, and criticise from a strictly economical point of view a bill that may lessen what is paid into the family bankers by some thousands of pounds. Perhaps I ought to do it, but if so I ought to be rid of the old privileges and favors which have made me what I am. You seem to forget that a Whig is mortal like everybody else. If you were fair to us, you would remember that we have had politics in the blood for many generations; that we are justly proud of the party we have belonged to, and the part we have played; that it is only strong convictions which make

men break old ties, — it is difficult to have strong convictions at the present day, — and that it would be a bitter humiliation to us to go and join the Tories in our latter days. We have fought them and beaten them too often to go back to-day, and look for a camp of refuge in their ranks. It is best to stay where we are, and to cheat ourselves, if we can, into believing that we belong to the modern Liberal party. I don't think any thing that we do matters very much, or will make any great difference to anybody but ourselves. And for ourselves I have but few hopes and few wishes. A very few years, and the only place where you will find a Whig will be in Macaulay's History."

"I give you up, Holmshill," said Danby. "I never will defend you again. I think you are thoroughly mean-spirited; and if you were to go on talking for another five minutes, you would almost make a Radical of me. A humble-minded Whig is a *lusus naturæ*, a monster of inconceivable parts and affections; and, if there are many others like you, I take it as a sign that the Whigs are pretty nearly done up, and that we must put some one else in their place who will be ready to fight when they are wanted. It's all very well, throwing down your arms, and saying, 'Pray, gentlemen, help yourselves;' but I think, whether you are a Whig or not, you are bound to fight for all that rightfully belongs to

you. Whenever you talk in this worm-inspired manner, I feel as if I should like to see three thousand peasant proprietors at the Towers with five acres each of the park land, and hear the answer they would make if some improving member of Parliament proposed to touch one blade of grass that grew on their outside border. I should like to hear a little of their unsophisticated mind upon unearned increment or unexhausted improvements, or tenant-right, — if one man wished to let land to another, — or collective agencies, or principles of the future. There would be some downright English in it. But there's that Gaby Holmshill goes down and meets his father's tenants, and lets some talking fellow tell him that an English farmer ought to sell his holding like an Irishman, and that all that the landlord has a right to is the rent, and that rent ought to have the approval of a tenant-farmer's court ; and Holmshill smiles, and makes some mild remark about the landlord's wish for fair play, and probably will end by putting his name on the back of a bill, if the talking fellow ever gets into Parliament, and complacently begs the House to make a little landlord of him in place of the big landlord, who, as he proposes, should resign in his favor. I don't think that will improve the breed. I think I am getting a Radical ; and, if we are to give up our partridge-shooting at

the Towers, I should like to see my three thousand small owners planted there, and have done with revolutions for half a century. There were few nicer men in the country than the English farmer in old days. But there are too many of the present lot who will let any enterprising gentleman with views persuade them that the greatest want of an honest man is an Act of Parliament to let him dip his hands into his landlord's pocket, and pick out what he happens to like best. They suddenly discover that it is the fairest thing in the world for the farmer to use his political influence to be buyer and seller at the same time, and to settle for the landlord as well as for himself the terms of the bargain; and Holmshill, who is trustee for the rights of everybody who owns property, who is bound to stand by these rights for the good of us all, palavers and hesitates, and says he has no heart to fight for property because he has so much of it. You would be a far better landlord if you told these men the plain truth. You and your hesitations make them think it is an honest thing not to stand upon the terms of a business contract, but to vote into their pocket what they never dreamt of having when they made their contract, and what they would never dream of asking for now if Gladstone had not the knack of teaching us all that rights go up when we are strong and troublesome, and go down when

we are weak and unpopular. It is a good lesson to teach hungry men, and we are all apt to be hungry if we can feed ourselves by voting breakfast and dinner into our own mouths. And the Whigs play into the hands of the prime minister. They pretend to watch the fold, and are always exchanging civilities with the wolf, and being talked over by him. The truth is, that our watch-dogs are getting old, and have lost their teeth: they can neither bite nor bark; and, if we are to keep what we have, it is time to put somebody else in their place. Bismarck says, that a nation that begins to give up what it possesses is not worth thinking about; and I say the same about a class. A class that lays down its rights, and, as they said in old days, gives its poll for the shearing, and its beard for the shaving, is about done also. Don't trouble about the Whigs, Pennell: they will never do you any good. They will all follow Hartington, like Highland sheep into a snow-drift, and come to their end together."

"Well," said Holmshill quietly, "whether we are sheep or sheep-dogs, get something better as soon as you can. I don't praise ourselves. But, after all, politics have their practical side; and what I want to ask you is, what would you have us do? Suppose we were to break with the party, how many of us would be elected at the next election? What are we to go and say

to the country? Shall we go and say, 'Here are a few of us, the remains of an old party, with nothing very new or definite to tell you, except that we think Mr. Gladstone does not exactly know his own mind, and is apt to be carried forward by the strongest wind that is blowing at the moment. The astronomers are prophesying that the comet of 1883 will go a little too near the sun, and get dragged into it; and we also expect that the same kind of accident may befall our prime minister. We are quite sure you will be much safer following us than him. We are ourselves in a very comfortable condition: there is nothing that we know of that particularly wants change; our shooting, hunting, and fishing prospects, we are glad to say, are in as good a state as we can expect after the season; and we feel quite sure that you will agree with us, that there would be no better foundation for a party than the old families and the family estates of England.' Well, I don't know if Pennell has the courage to go and say that. I am afraid, if I were to go and speak my own mind, I should say, 'Gentlemen, I am as fond of the good things of the world as anybody else, but I am a little puzzled to find myself in such ample and comfortable possession of them. I am the centre of an enormous machinery. I think in the paternal mansion there are fifteen housemaids, two cooks and a half, butler, under-

butler, groom of the chambers, more footmen than I know of ; outside, a tribe of keepers, foresters, bailiffs, estate agents, and all kinds of people : and of all these I am the special flower and product. I am obliged, gentlemen, to confess, that, if you propose to divide me up amongst you, I shall be at some loss to find any arguments against the proceeding that are likely to move you very deeply ; though I must also honestly say, that I don't think I shall do any of you much good if you once begin to scramble for me. I doubt if I am quite worth all the cooks, butlers, and keepers it takes to produce and maintain me ; but I am not yet confident that you will be on a better road to happiness after you have made a meal of me, than you were before. Now, gentlemen, pray do as you think fit."

"You are giving yourself unnecessary trouble, Holmshill," interposed Geoffrey Lewin, "about the digestion of the people. You may be sure that will arrange itself. Why, they will eat up the Towers at a mouthful when the time comes, and be as happy after it as Pluto was when we found him finishing the dead sheep."

"But seriously, Lewin," said Bramston, "let us take for granted for a moment, that it is better we should sacrifice Holmshill"—

"We shall have to go and shoot partridges in Morocco if we do," interposed Danby. "I hear there is some sport to be had there."

“That it is better,” continued Bramston, “that all the large land-owners should go, that our people will be happier and better off, that property itself will be safer, and agitation less, — more people inside the charmed ring, and fewer outside, — can we justify the doing of it? Where do we get the power to do what we like with Holmshill?”

“The people gave, and the people can take away,” observed Lewin.

“How little you have learnt or profited all this session, Angus!” said Danby. “If you want to divide Holmshill into little pieces, all you have got to do is to turn on the Gladstone tap; call it a just and generous measure, praise the people for their forbearing spirit, and declare, without going into details, that Holmshill will be generally better off for it, and will shoot just as many partridges after as he did before, and therefore it cannot possibly make any difference to him. It is, of course, plain on the face of it, that we shall save him the expense of collecting rents and of paying rates, taxes, and fire-insurance. If you wish it, I am quite ready to give you a second-reading speech on the subject at once, to show that in Holmshill’s case all great principles must be laid aside; that in their very nature they were never intended to apply to him; that even Tory landholders have used words which could only mean that he

should be cut up ; that, whilst Holmshill unites all the many virtues we should expect and desire to find in him, yet there are some few other money-grubbing persons in his country for whom we must, unfortunately, hold him accountable, and therefore an inexorable necessity requires that we should submit him to a process which I will proceed, with truly architectonic skill, to describe at full length to you. And then I will let you off with only ten minutes about justice as the guide of our actions."

"Please don't," said Bramston: "you have given us one second-reading speech already this morning, and now I want a serious answer to my question. Have we a right to cut up Holmshill? Is there a right and wrong in the matter? If there are such things in politics, on what do they depend? If there is no right and wrong in the matter, what is to make us decide either one way or the other?"

"My dear Angus," said Lewin, "you are still back in the darkness of the Middle Ages. Go and ask Gladstone. He will spend the whole morning in explaining it to you, and then do exactly the opposite in the evening when he comes down to the House of Commons."

"Go and inquire in Saturn," said Danby. "I know nowhere short of that, where you will get an answer in the present day. But I must be going. Give me my *sacré* hat."

“No: let him ask the whips,” said Pennell, “and I shall have the pleasure of watching Kensington’s face whilst he answers.”

“I think it is a very good question,” said Holmshill; “and if we were not all of us *farceurs*, we should be able to answer it. Good-by.”

And they all dispersed to their various engagements, leaving Bramston to finish his cigar alone.

# THE EUROPEAN TERROR.

BY ÉMILE DE LAVELEYE.

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THE repression of the conspiracy of the *Mano Nera* in Andalusia, the explosion of bombs charged with dynamite in our peaceful little Belgium, the riots of Monçeau-les-Mines in France, the Nihilistic character which the Irish agrarian movement is taking, and the terrible explosion at Westminster, show that it is clearly time that this movement, which has attained already so wide a development, and which is certainly destined to play a most important rôle in the history of Christian and civilized nations, should be studied attentively.

The Socialists of the present day may be divided into two parties or sects: on the one hand there are the Collectivists, on the other the Nihilists, or Anarchists. Sometimes these two parties are opposed to each other, as at the present moment in France: at others they unite together, as in Spain for the *Mano Nera* conspiracy. This conspiracy is of a pronounced agrarian character, and has been principally re-

cruited from agricultural laborers and small farmers, who were reduced to despair by the *latefundia* and bad harvests. The principles of the Spanish *Mano Nera* are a sort of communism, as may be judged from the following passage of their programme : —

“Land,” they say, “exists for the common good of mankind, and all have an equal right to its possession: it was made what it is by the active labor of the working classes. The existing social organization is both criminal and absurd. The workers produce, and the rich do nothing but benefit; and not only so, but have a hold on the workers: therefore it is impossible to feel too deep a hatred for political parties, for all are equally despicable. All property acquired by the labor of others, be it revenue or interest, is illegitimate: the only legitimate possessions are those which result directly from personal exertions. Consequently our society declares that the rich be held to participate no longer in the rights of man to his fellow; and that to combat them, as they deserve, all means are good and necessary, not excepting steel, fire, and even slander.”

Their mode of action is exactly that of the Nihilists in Russia, and that employed also for the agrarian crimes in Ireland. The tenets of the popular or secret tribunal resemble also those of Nihilism. They are headed by the following declaration : —

“Whereas the Government, by its refusal to accept the international law, has prevented a peaceful solution of the social question, it has become necessary to establish a secret revolutionary organization. Victory is still

far distant. Sins are daily committed which must be punished; and, as all the members of this society are bent on a chastisement being carried out, a popular tribunal is charged with the condemnation and punishment of the crimes of the middle classes. Members of this revolutionary tribunal must belong to the International League, and be capable of executing the task they undertake. The middle classes may be chastised in every possible way, — by steel, fire, poison, or otherwise.”

In the fourteenth century Socialism in England had very similar notions, save the reference to the employment of force. The following words are put into the mouth of a priest, John Ball, speaking in the name of the peasantry, by Froissart: “Good people, things can not and will not go well in England till all shall be in common; that there be neither lord nor vassal, but we shall be all united. To what good are those we call lords masters over us? Why do they hold us in bondage? And if we be all descended from the same father and mother, Adam and Eve, how can they show themselves better than we, save only in that they spend what we earn? They are clothed in silks and camocas, in velvets and furs, while we wear the poorest cloth. They have their wines, their savory dishes, good bread and cakes; while we sleep on straw, and live on rye-bread and water. They have their manors and palaces, which they enjoy in idle luxury; while we labor in the wind and rain to earn a

scanty nourishment. And yet it is our labor that gives them their plenty."

As early as the close of the thirteenth century the communistic ideas of the orders of the Begging Brothers found an echo in the verses of the Flemish poet, Jakob van Marlant. The following is an extract :—

" Twee worde in die werelt syn :  
Dats allene *myn* ende *dyn*,  
Mocht men die verdriven  
Pays ende vrede bleve fyn.  
Het ware al vri, niemen eygyn,  
Manne metten wiven.  
Het waer gemene tarwe ende wyn."

("Two words exist in the world, *mine* and *thine*. If they could be suppressed, peace would reign, and all would be free, — no serfs, neither men nor women ; corn and wine would be in common.")

I think it may be safely affirmed, that in France the majority of workmen in the large towns and great centres of industry, in addition to a certain number of agricultural laborers, are already Socialists. According to information, for which I am indebted to the kindness of M. B. Malon, the author of a good history of Socialism, and one of the leaders of the movement in Paris at the present time, the party may be approximatively divided as follows : at the extreme left are the Anarchists or Nihilists, such as Prince Krapotkine and

Elisée Reclus. They, to a certain extent, hold Proudhon's ideas of *anarchy*, but follow more directly Bakounine, who, by the formation of secret societies from the remnants of the International League, has spread notions of Russian Nihilism in almost every Socialist circle. The Anarchists are few in number, but they are exceedingly enthusiastic and fanatic; and the extreme adepts of the party hesitate at nothing—petroleum, fire, bombs, dynamite, and even assassination, as in Spain. Metayer, who died recently in Brussels from the results of the explosion of dynamite concealed on his person, and his companion, Cyvoct, belonged to this dangerous class.

Nihilistic Anarchism does not make much progress in France, because Frenchmen have a preference for fixed ideas for their programmes of reform. The articles of a new social code, to please them, must be clearly drawn up, and all the plans easy to grasp. Collectivism offers all this to a certain extent, and we will now try to analyze its principles. Collectivists are themselves divided into two groups, and more distinctly so since the Socialists' Congress of St. Etienne, in September, 1882. There are the Collectivists, the followers of Marx, who live in expectancy of a revolutionary movement, like the ancient Jacobins; and the evolutionist-Collectivists, who are beginning to admit the

truth announced by science, that, in the social order, as in nature, all must change slowly and by evolution. These latter are called "Possibilists," because they recommend the urging of legal claims, and take part in electoral conflicts, not merely as a protest, but that their ideas may gain access to Parliament.<sup>1</sup> In this respect they follow the example of the German Socialists, who have not only succeeded in sending eleven or twelve members to Parliament, but have also induced the German Government to take up the question of social reforms, as doubtless the number of votes obtained by the Socialists in the electioneering total did much to influence this decision.

Among Socialist workmen the evolutionist-Collectivist creed is the most popular, and gains rapid ground against the "Irreconcilables," — the Anarchists and the Jacobins, — who dub their opponents traitors and cowards. In order more clearly to show the notions they hold, I will now quote some of the most important

<sup>1</sup> In the election which has taken place at Belleville to replace Gambetta, each of these parties had its candidate. The Marxists had selected Jules Guesde, and the Possibilists J. B. Dumay, a mechanist and former mayor of Creusot. Among the chief men of this party may be mentioned Jules Joffrin, town councillor, an enlightened and active workman; John Labusquière, an orator well listened to at meetings; Deynaud, said to be an economist; Paul Brousse, a converted Anarchist; and B. Malon, the theorist and learned man of the party.

passages of a programme of theirs recently published :—

“Whereas the emancipation of the producing classes is that of all human beings, indistinctive of either sex or race; that the producers cannot be truly free until they themselves possess the means of production, and that there exist but two ways of their so possessing them,—first, individually, and this has never existed as an established state of things, and industrial progress has rendered it wholly out of the question; and, secondly, collectively,—and as the very development of capitalist society prepared the elements requisite for collective possession, the French Socialist workmen, considering a return to this collective possession of the means of production the great object to be obtained, have decided to take part in elections, adopting the following programme. . . . Economic programme: 1st, One day of rest weekly, and the labor of adults reduced to eight hours per day. Prohibition to employ children under fourteen years of age in factories. 2d, A legal *minimum* of wages, to be fixed every year, according to the local price of provisions. 3d, Equal wages for the two sexes (their labor being equal). 4th, Complete and scientific and professional instruction for all children at the cost of the State and the Commune. 5th, Society to provide for old people and invalids. 6th, The master to be held responsible for all accidents. 7th, The workmen to have a voice in the drawing-up of any special regulations for their special works or factory. 8th, Revision of all contracts that have alienated public property, banks, railways, mines; and the working of the factories belonging to the state to be intrusted to workmen themselves. 9th, Abolition of indirect taxation, to be replaced by a progressive tax on all incomes which exceed 3,000 frs.

(£120), suppression of all indirect succession, and of all direct succession exceeding 20,000 frs. (£800). 10th, Reconstitution of communal property. 11th, The Commune to appropriate all unemployed funds at their disposal to building, on the land belonging to them, workmen's cottages and warehouses; and these to be let to workmen without profit to the Commune."

The word Collectivism is a new one, but the idea forms part of every system of present Radical Socialism. Radical Socialism either wholly suppresses or restricts the right of hereditary succession within very narrow limits, even in the direct line: because the effect of this is to increase inequality, as the heirs are in the enjoyment of possessions which they themselves have not labored for; and this is in direct violation of the doctrine which says that property should be the reward of personal exertions, and, consequently, contrary to distributive justice. Hereditary succession suppressed or limited, what would become of the lands and other means of production left ownerless? Evidently, as at the present day when there is no heir, they would go to the State, who would, in some cases, depute the Commune to hold them.

Collectivism may be conceived more or less completely applied, according as the state hold only the soil (and this is the system which is being now so much discussed in England, under the name of *nationalisation of land*), or as the

state hold all fixed capital (and, in this latter case, all that is reserved to individuals is the enjoyment of what they can purchase with the immediate produce of their labor). The "Saint-Simonians" have gone deeper than any in this problem; for without stopping to trace any plan of ideal organization, like Fourier or Cabet, and without referring to or quoting economic principles, as Marx and Lassalle did, and most ably too, they at once, and very directly, attack hereditary succession, on which, in point of fact, all depends. But, to obtain a more precisely defined notion of Collectivism, it is necessary to study the writings of the Belgian Socialist, Colins, and of his disciples. Collectivism, which has become the gospel of contemporary Socialism, sprang, it is true, from the general effect of the equalizing movement of which it is, indeed, the enforced conclusion, and not at all from the works of Colins. But it is Colins's theory of Collectivism—especially as condensed by his disciples, Hugentobler, Borda, and Agathon de Potter—which is the most clearly defined and the easiest to grasp.

Colins and his disciples are very proud of their philosophical views, on which they maintain the whole of their system, which they call Rational Socialism, is based; but here the lack of any special study becomes too clearly visible. They admit the immortality of our spiritual

being, which they call by a strange misapplication of the word "sensibility," and they deny the existence of God. They are most earnest in demonstrating that notions of morality, justice, and equality, as regards rights and privileges, are founded solely on the permanency of human personality; but they do not recognize that the pursuit of a rational order supposes an ideal, an aim and object beyond and above ourselves. They are therefore at the same time Spiritualists and atheists.

All men are equal, as all are formed by the union of a sensibility to an organism. All men are brothers, as all have the same origin. Man alone, among all created beings, is responsible for his actions; for he alone is conscious, intelligent, and a free agent. As opposed to the order of physics, where all is fatal, there exists a moral order of justice and liberty.

Man being a responsible agent, his every action must be infallibly and fatally rewarded or punished, according as it is or is not in accordance with the conscience of the perpetrator. And, for this punishment to be inevitable, it must take place in an existence posterior to the present one. All irrefutable arguments constitute *impersonal reason*. When this is regarded as prescribing rules, and authorizing or forbidding actions, it may be called *sovereignty*.

Originally there only existed man, and the

planet on which he developed. On the one hand there was labor ; on the other, the soil as raw material, without which all labor would have been of course impossible. But the union of the two elements of production created matter of a special kind,—the accumulation, so to speak, of labor, changing in its nature ; and this matter, detached from the planet, is called *capital*.

Capital, while fostering production, is an instrument of labor, but in order to become productive it must have something to act upon ; and this something is the soil, which is therefore indispensable. According to Colins, the following important result arises from the absolute necessity man feels for an object on which to expend his strength. Labor is free when the raw material or the soil belongs to the laborer. Otherwise it is fettered : the workman's labor is then for the benefit of the holder of the soil or the owner of the raw material ; he works with his permission ; and, when a man needs another's authorization to act, he is not a free agent.

A collective appropriation of the soil would secure to every member of society a permanent proprietorship of the national soil ; and for land to become collective property it would be necessary, in the first place, that it should be at the disposal of those who wished to turn it to ac-

count, and, secondly, that the rent paid by the tenant to society should be employed for the joint benefit of all. According to the Belgian Socialist, there exist two forms of property quite distinct the one from the other: the one in vogue at the present day, in which land belongs to individuals or certain classes of individuals, and labor is fettered; the other, the system of the future, in which land will become collective property, and labor will be free.

What we have stated above refers to the production of wealth. We will now examine how Rational Socialism arranges for its distribution. When labor is free, — and this is the case only when land is accessible to all, — every man can live without receiving wages from his fellow. Men then work for others only when offered, as salary, more than they could gain if they worked for their own profit.

When such a state of things exist, we say in economic terms that wages are at a *maximum*; the greater share in the profits of labor going to the laborer, and the lesser to capital. When labor is fettered, workmen, to avoid starvation, offer to work for the owners of land and the possessors of capital; and, as there is competition, wages fall to what is strictly necessary for the most ordinary requirements of life. If the holders of wealth do not need laborers, the superfluous hands must disappear. Wages then

fall to a *minimum*; and the largest share in the profits of labor goes to proprietors and capitalists, the smallest to the laborer. When labor is free, every man's wealth increases in proportion to his own labor. In the opposite case, a man's riches increase as his capital accumulates. Colins deducts the two following consequences from these two dissimilar systems of property in land: When land is owned individually, the riches of the upper classes and the poverty of the lower increase in parallel lines, and in proportion as intellectual power develops in society; while, when land is collectively appropriated, the riches of every one increase in proportion to the activity displayed by each, and in accordance with the economic progress made by civilization. Colins seeks a confirmation of his views in history.

The earliest sovereign is physical strength. The father of the family rules; the strongest of the tribe commands; but if the number of human beings increase, this sort of sovereignty can be but of short duration, for he who is at one time the strongest cannot always remain so. What happens then? In order to continue chief, he changes, says Jean Jacques Rousseau, his strength into a right, and obedience into a duty. To this end he affirms that there exists a being, conceived as a very powerful man, called God; that God has revealed rules of action,

and has appointed king and priest as infallible legislators and interpreters of his revelation; that God has given to every man an immortal soul; and according as man has or has not been obedient to revealed law in this world, so in the world to come will he be either rewarded or punished. But as these doctrines must not be examined or looked into, ignorance is maintained and thought compressed as much as possible. Theocratic sovereignty, or sovereignty by divine right, is thus established, and society becomes aristocratic and feudal. This is the historical period which rational Socialism names the *period of social ignorance and of compressibility of examination*.

After a term of years, longer or shorter according as the development of intelligence and the discoveries which follow are rapid or the reverse, and as communications with other lands are facilitated, the examination into facts can no longer be wholly suppressed. Then the sovereignty by divine right is contested, and its authority falls to the ground. The government is transformed, and despoiled of its theocratic mask. It becomes merely a sovereignty of strength; that is to say, of the majority of the people. Aristocratic society becomes "*bourgeoise*;" and the historical *period of ignorance, combined with the incompressibility of examination*, is attained.

Society is then profoundly agitated, and disorganization spreads rapidly. The theories and principles which previously insured the obedience of the great masses of the population lose their power. Every thing is doubted and discussed. Denial of the ultra-vital sanction and of an anthropomorphic God ends in the affirmation of materialism. After this, with an ever-growing number of people, personal interest wields a greater sway than notions of order and justice, and a state of society is reached of which Colins speaks as follows: *a period of social ignorance, in which immorality spreads in proportion as intelligence develops.* This is the stage we have now reached.

As pauperism increases in similar proportions, producing revolutions, this *bourgeois* society is but of short duration; and sovereignty by divine right is restored for a time, when new revolutions bring back the *bourgeoisie*. Society cannot tear itself from the dismal circle in which it turns since the earliest origins of humanity. When, as a result of new inventions, of the development of the press, and the impossibility to suppress the universal enlightenment which ensues, all return to a theocratic form of government has become out of the question, humanity has but two alternatives, — either to definitely perish in final anarchy, or methodically to re-organize itself according to recog-

nized dictates which reason demonstrates. It is at this point that humanity attains the last period of its historical development, — the period of *knowledge*, which will last as long as the life of the human species is possible on the globe. A theocratic administration, says Colins, is order based on despotism; a democratic administration is liberty engendering anarchy; a rational or *logocratic* administration would be productive, at the same time, of both order and freedom.

According to the Belgian Socialist, the society of the future will be organized as follows: All men, being by right equal, will occupy equal conditions with regard to labor. Man is a free agent: his labor must, then, be free also; and to this end matter must be made subordinate to intelligence, and labor must own both land and capital. Wages would be then always at the highest possible maximum. All men are brothers, for they have a common origin. If, then, any are unable to support themselves, society must care for them, and supply their wants. In the intellectual world there must be an equal distribution of knowledge to all, and, in the material world, social appropriation to all of the soil and of the wealth acquired by past generations and transformed into capital.

Society must give theoretical and practical instruction to all minors gratuitously, and chil-

dren be taught, by physical science, in what manner to act on matter to be able to turn it to the best advantage; and, by moral science, how they must behave to their fellow-men. On leaving the establishments for public education, on coming of age, young men will be called upon to serve a sort of apprenticeship for active life in the service of the state, thus paying in a measure the debt incurred during childhood. When of age, each member of society will be given a fixed sum as a dowry to establish himself in life, and this sum will be taken from the surplus of the state receipts. Three different careers are now open to the young man: he can either work alone, or associate himself with others to produce in common, or, if he prefer avoiding all personal risks, he can hire himself to another, who will direct and take the responsibility of all operations.

Society offers either land or capital to the first two categories. To this end, land is divided into farms, larger or smaller according to the locality in which they may be situated, the requirements of the population, and the fertility of the soil. These farms are let to the highest bidder, who is forbidden to sub-let. Society also lends capital, in order to prevent individual capitalists demanding a higher rate of interest than that fixed by law.

Colins suggests also several other measures

for assuring the subjection of capital to labor, or, in other words, maintaining wages at as high a rate as possible, and also for stimulating every member of society to labor to the best of his ability.

The first of these measures is the abolishment of perpetual interest, which shall be replaced by the payment of debts as annuities during the life of the creditor ; the abolishment of capitalist associations, those for labor being alone sanctioned, and the competition of society itself against individual trading. The second consists in limiting hereditary succession to the direct line, all other successions *ab intestat* returning to society, and in laying a heavy tax upon all wills.

By the enforcement of these several measures, the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity would be established ; at the same time the turning to account of labor by individual capital would be effectually prevented.

The disciples of Colins maintain that in this system there is perfect harmony between intelligence and property. All have a share in the possession of the soil ; all have their leisure, and all possess the intellectual and material necessities for their earthly happiness. Society based on principles rationally incontrovertible may be freely discussed ; being founded on justice, there need be no fear for its stability.

Being in conformity with reason, and guaranteeing to each of its members a maximum of well-being, according to his personal aptitudes, he who is miserable has but himself to reproach for his misery. Who, then, would dream of overthrowing an administration which injures no one, but gives satisfaction to all?

Colins's Collectivism is applicable to land only. The same ideas have been recently and more forcibly set forth by Henry George in his book entitled "Progress and Liberty," and by M. A. Russell Wallace in his "Nationalization of Land." The idea of Collectivism applied to every branch of production was foreseen as early as 1854 by a French philosopher, François Huet, who published a most able work on social reform, entitled "Le Règne Social du Christianisme." The aim of this book is to prove that equalizing Socialism has its root in the Old Testament and in the gospel.

The first article of all the recently published Socialist programme is general Collectivism, or, as they call it very strangely, *Communisme libertaire*. But the only publication in which the system is clearly defined and scientifically discussed is a short pamphlet entitled "Quintessenz des Socialismus" (translated into French by M. B. Malon). It consists of extracts from a large work on Sociology, "Bau und Leben des Socialen Körpers" ("Constitution and Life of

the Social Body”), by Dr. Albert Schäffle, formerly financial minister of Austria, and one of the most eminent of Germany’s economists.

Let us follow Dr. Schäffle’s analysis, and endeavor to obtain a correct idea of Collectivism applied to both capital and land. We must beware of mixing up this system with Communitistic Utopias. The ideal of these latter was a Trappist monastery, common labor, a common life, common enjoyment of produce, without any regard to the work accomplished, just as in family life. Collectivism admits of families living apart; and, by making all remuneration proportionate to the labor effected, it keeps up private interest. With a collective organization, there should be as many co-operative societies as there are principal branches of industry,—agricultural societies, transport societies, manufacturing societies of all kinds. Farms, mines, railways, factories, workshops, which are in principle the collective property of the state, would be handed over to workmen’s corporations, who would be charged with their administration, thus replacing the present joint-stock companies. Workmen would be paid in accordance with the quantity and quality of their labor: there would be, therefore, the same stimulant for activity and care as at the present day, at least for the workmen. The only difference would be, that, on the one hand,

they would be paid the total of what their work produced, nothing having to be deducted for rent, interest, or profit ; and, on the other hand, all, even those now idle, would be forced to work : for, the means of production being no longer private property, the income they now bring in to individuals, and which allows of their living in idleness, would have ceased to exist.

In primitive societies, where every man possesses his instrument of labor, land, tools, or implements, — the wherewithal to carry on his trade, whatever it may be, — the ideal of justice, which consists in each enjoying what he produces, is realized ; but, since the introduction of large industries and extensive landed property, the remuneration of labor is reduced to a minimum by the number of applications for land and for labor, — that is to say, by the anticipatory claims of land and capital. Collectivism, admitting the co-operative productive system which the employment of machinery enforces, aims at realizing the end which would be attained by generalized private property ; viz., the securing of the full enjoyment of the produce to the producer. Every thing concerning means of transport and circulating medium, money, credit, etc., would become a public service. Dr. Schäffle even supposes the realization of a general system of exchange and

remuneration spoken of by Proudhon and Marx, and which would be as follows: By virtue of the economic theory which holds that all value is derived exclusively from labor, the workman would be paid for each object the *average* number of hours necessary for the manufacture of the said object, and he would be paid in checks or tickets, to be refunded in goods. The wares to be sold would be brought to public or co-operative stores, where checks would be exchanged for merchandise, and *vice versâ*. This mechanism of exchange is ingenious. The great London co-operative stores give some idea of it; but they cannot be said to form an integral part of Collectivism.

The best way to form any accurate notion of the Collectivist system is to imagine that the *Equitable Pioncers* of Rochdale have obtained a complete success, and that all has passed into their hands, — lands, houses, shops, warehouses, and factories, — and that every other locality has imitated Rochdale's example. Collectivism does not wholly abolish hereditary succession; but as all real property would belong to the state, to the commune, or to corporations, and as again every man would be forced to live on what he gained by his trade or by the function he occupied, it would follow, as a natural consequence, that the accumulation of wealth would be very much restricted, and that, in a general

way, all that people could inherit would be furniture, money, and movables.

Dr. Schäffle seems inclined to think that a state of things such as this may exist in the future. Some people go even so far as to imagine that the spirit of renunciation will again have sway, that there will be life in common, and that many of the wonders that arose in ancient times from this system will be repeated. M. Renan, in his volume on the Apostles, writes the following charming lines on this subject (p. 132):—

“We have forgotten that mankind tasted the most perfect joy when life was lived in common. The Psalm, ‘Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity,’ can no longer be applied to us. But when modern individualism has borne its latest fruit; when depressed and sorrowing humanity shall have become powerless, and shall return to grand old institutions and to severe discipline; when our wretched ‘*bourgeois*’ society shall have been chased away by the ideal and heroic portion of humanity,—then life in common will be valued at its true worth. Selfishness, an essential law of civil society, will not be sufficient for great minds. The words of Jesus, and the ideas held as to poverty in the Middle Ages, will be looked upon as containing deep sense. The beautiful ideal traced by the author of the Acts of the Apostles will be inscribed as a prophetic revelation at the entrance of this paradise of humanity: ‘And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common. And all that believed were

together, and had all things common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart' " (Acts iv. 32, ii. 44, 45, 46).

Stuart Mill also occasionally indulged in these poetic visions; but Dr. Schäffle keeps on practical ground, and poses well the crucial question, which is this: No social reform can possibly succeed if it fail to recognize the psychological fact on which the present individual system is based, viz., that it is private interest which urges to production. Neither penalties, nor appeals to sentiments of duty and honor, would guarantee a sufficient amount of zeal and care being displayed by all concerned, to insure the largest amount possible being produced at the lowest cost, without any waste of either time or raw material. The great difficulty is the efficient directorship of any large industrial enterprise. It is the lack of such directorship that has occasioned the failure of many co-operative societies. Collectivism supposes that workmen's corporations are capable of working alone, of taking the management of every thing into their own hands. When workingmen's societies have given proof of this, the triumph of the new organization will be a mere question of time; but so long as the working classes do

not show themselves capable of managing without their masters, all attempts at hastening the coming of a new order of things will terminate in signal defeats.

Anarchism and Nihilism may be very briefly analyzed, as they are mere negations. Proudhon says in his book, "*La Révolution Sociale*" (p. 255), "No authority, no government. What society needs is anarchy. The object to be attained is the abolition of authority, the clearing-away of all government organism." The Nihilistic formula traced by Bakounine in the programme of that truly revolutionary association, *l'Alliance Universelle*, which has spread the germs of violent Socialism, ready systematically to employ bombs, daggers, dynamite, and petroleum, all over Europe, is as follows :—

"Our association, the International Brotherhood, wishes for a universal, social, philosophic, economic, and political revolution; in order that of the present social order of things — which is founded on the right of property, on making capital by oppression, on the principle of authority either religious or metaphysical, '*bourgeoisement*,' doctrinal, or even Jacobinly revolutionary — not one stone may be left upon another, in all Europe first, and afterwards in the entire world. To the cry of 'Peace for the workers,' 'Liberty for the oppressed,' we desire the destruction of every thing, states and churches, with all their institutions and their laws, — religious, political, judicial, financial, educational, economic, or social, — to the end that all these millions of poor human beings, deceived, oppressed, and held in thralldom, delivered at

last from their directors and benefactors, official and non-official, may breathe the pure air of liberty."

Do not question a Nihilist as to what the new social organization shall be. He will reply, "We wish for complete amorphism. It is a crime to foresee a society of the future; for researches of this sort prevent utter destruction, and impede the advance of the revolution. Every Utopist is a tyrant, for he urges his plans of reform on all. The watchword of our party is exceedingly simple, — Universal destruction; *nihil*, nothing. As in the early ages of humanity, a new organization will spontaneously spring up, and will be just what is best suited to the wants of the delivered people."

It is certain that the devotion and religious fanaticism of the Nihilists, and their diffusion all over our continent, where they become manifest by acts of fierce violence, as in Russia, at Monceau-les-Mines in France, in Andalusia, and constantly in different parts of Italy, is one of the most curious phenomena of our time. It may be compared to an incandescent lava which from time to time bursts through the stratum which hides it from view. How explain that distinguished and enlightened men, men of noble and humane sentiments, — Prince Krapotkine, for instance, and the eminent geographist Elisée Reclus, — can allow themselves to be led away by doctrines so monstrous? History

gives us the explanation. At certain periods of social transformation, those persons who thirst after the ideal suffer and feel indignant at sight of the evils with which the human race is afflicted. The contrast between the order of equity and justice they aspire to see established, and the iniquities of the world, is quite intolerable to them. They do not believe that successive progress will suffice to banish these iniquities; and they long for the total destruction of the existing order of things, for a new one to be founded on its ruins. These were exactly the views held by the early Christians. This world was to perish utterly by fire before the kingdom of God could come. Even the Evangelists describe the signs of the advent of this great calamity. The religious songs of the Middle Ages contain echoes of these eschatological notions.

“Dies iræ, Dies illa,  
Solvat sæculum in favilla.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The idea of the destruction of the world springs from the great problem of evil and from the aspirations of man for a better order of things. God cannot allow iniquity to live forever. He will come, and re-establish justice. Job discusses the terrible problem. All Eastern religions believed in the existence of a better world; and Virgil admirably sums up this belief in his fourth Eclogue, “*Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo*,” etc. In one of the songs of the Edda, Voluspâ, the end of the world is described in a similar manner as in the New Testament: “The sun is darkened, and the brilliant stars disappear from the sky, and smoke surrounds the destructive fire

As the destruction of the universe failed to take place, those who were the most impatient for a reign of justice withdrew, in the first instance to the desert, and, later on, to monasteries. It was this same sentiment which inspired Rousseau in the eighteenth century. Civil institutions consecrate propriety and inequality, whence arise the servitude and misery of the multitude; reformation is impossible; there must be a return to primitive existence, or, as Voltaire puts it, in mockery of poor J. J. Rousseau, we must go off into the forests, and there walk on four legs. The brigand Karl Moor, in Schiller's famous piece, who rises in insurrection against all social laws, is a type of the Nihilists of the present day. It may be recollected he says, —

“Happy the man who is the fiercest to burn every thing, and the most relentless to kill.” (Act I. Scene 2.)

which is to destroy the world. Gigantic flames rise to heaven. Vala sees springing up from the midst of the ocean a new earth, covered with admirable verdure. The fields produce without being planted. All sin and suffering disappear. Baldur will return with Hadur to inhabit the sacred abode of the gods. The people will be in the enjoyment of eternal peace; and then will come from above, to preside at the great judgment, the All-powerful One, the ruler of the universe. All dissensions and discords will be calmed, and he will give an inviolable table of laws to be established forever.” Is not this exactly the kingdom of heaven as foretold by the prophets and in the New Testament?

The same reasoning which led to a belief in the end of the world, and to a desire to return to a primitive state of society, leads also to Nihilism; only, as Nihilists look for nothing from divine justice, the existence of which they deny, it is not fire sent from heaven, but the avenging flame of petroleum, that is destined to destroy the present social order. The Utopian schemes of Owen, Fourier, Cabet, and Louis Blanc, all failed; the difficulty of carrying out economic reform has been proved by science and by facts: must we, then, wait till the gradual spread of education and of equality improve, by slow degrees, the present situation? In that case there are still centuries to be passed with things as they are. No, it is too much! A curse on society! Away with its institutions and its laws! We will overthrow all, and re-establish things in their natural and primitive condition, as Rousseau proposed.

If we examine closely the present social situation, we cannot feel any surprise at these sentiments: civilized states at war, either open or secret, one with the other, draining their populations by unlimited armaments, and retaining for military service the flower of the nation's youth; crushing debts everywhere, — national, provincial, and communal, — in all about £6,000,000,000, bringing in a revenue of about £300,000,000 to £350,000,000, taken from the

necessitous, and serving to allow an ever-increasing number of people to live on their income and do nothing; everywhere enormous budgets, quite out of proportion with the advantages which accrue thence to the people; the cultivators of the soil reduced to live on bread and water, on potatoes as in Ireland, and on *pellagra*-engendering maize as in Italy; the workingman's condition a trifle ameliorated, it is true, but not at all in proportion to the increase in production; in the upper classes, luxury overflowing and becoming daily more refined and more wanton; parliamentary administration, which was to have brought with it salvation, incapable of carrying out any great social reforms, either under a constitutional monarch or a republic; and if at times a minister is met with, who, like Prince Bismarck, desires to take steps in this direction, the satisfied middle classes raising objections to such a policy, with the watchword of *laissez-faire*.

Anarchism and Nihilism, in spite of the growing number and the despairing energy of their adherents, are, at present, wholly powerless to jeopardize the safety of the present social order if all goes as usual; but suppose one of those crises, when there is a collapse of power, were to take place,—a great defeat, a middle-class revolution, or, for instance, an attempt at a restoration in France,—then it is much to be

feared that the terrible scenes of the Commune of 1871 would be repeated with even more terrific features. In the last volume of "Paris et ses Organes," M. Maxime du Camp casts a melancholy glance at the beautiful city, reflecting that it will be one day the prey of fire. Let us hope that this sad fate will not befall our capitals, and that a transformation of the social order will take place without the aid of petroleum and dynamite.

# THE NATIONALIZATION OF THE LAND.

FROM "THE EDINBURGH REVIEW."

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IN an age in which no creed, system, or doctrine, however venerable, escapes criticism, and no fortress of orthodoxy stands secure against the assaults of speculation, political economy, a science of modern birth, scarcely yet emerged from its struggle for recognition, cannot reasonably claim that its conclusions should pass unchallenged. Though some may attribute an almost axiomatic certainty to doctrines which have won the assent of the most acute and sagacious minds, there are others who regard the "unsettled questions" of political economy as still more numerous and important than its established maxims. Any restraint upon freedom of inquiry would certainly be incongruous with a science which conspicuously inscribes freedom of action upon its own banner; and we most readily concede that no deference for authority, however high, should deter inquirers from contesting economical doctrines that have received the sanction of distinguished names. On the

other hand, it has been aptly remarked by a writer in another field, that "those who support social paradoxes must expect severe treatment, as by the usages of war the conquerors never spare those who maintain untenable positions." Any writer who ventures to controvert doctrines which have been well tested, and are generally accepted as true, ought to take good heed to the temper of his weapons and the metal of the armor in which he marches to the attack.

A more daring assailant of the faith which is in Malthus, Mill, McCulloch, Fawcett, and their school, has not for some time appeared in the lists than Mr. Henry George, whose volume entitled "Progress and Poverty" has been circulated in the cheapest form from the London press. The author is, we understand, a citizen of the State of California; evidently no unpractised writer, for the paradoxes which he upholds are maintained with a considerable amount of ingenuity and skill. The illustrations of his argument are drawn from a wide field of observation, both in the Old World and in the New; the language is forcible and incisive; and the whole discussion is conducted with a vivacity and spirit well calculated to affect impressionable minds, and to gain adherents among those whose convictions upon economical subjects are rather superficial than scientific. The conclusion which his reasonings are directed to estab-

lish is, indeed, no original doctrine ; for it has had its apostles both in this country and elsewhere, of whom none is more notorious than the author of the famous maxim “ *La propriété c’est le vol.* ” As advocated by Mr. George, it is described by his phrase, the “ nationalization of the land ; ” in other words, the abolition of land-ownership in private hands. The problem which he undertakes to solve is that which has exercised the sagacity of the most thoughtful minds, and foiled the efforts of the most ardent philanthropists. It is the existence of the wide gulf between rich and poor ; the juxtaposition in almost every advanced community, certainly not least in our own, of the two extremes of exorbitant wealth and grinding poverty. But it is not merely the co-existence of these two extreme conditions in the same society, that Mr. George descants upon : he boldly asserts that the two stand together in the relation of cause and effect ; that it is the progress which has produced the poverty. In his own words, “ all the increased wealth that progress brings goes but to build up great fortunes, to increase luxury, and to make sharper the contrast between the house of Have and the house of Want.” According to him, all the improvements in productive power, labor-saving inventions, the contributions of science, every device by which wealth is multiplied, tend only to the widening of the chasm, and the deeper

impoverishment and degradation of the working portion of mankind. Nor is it only in the older communities of Europe that he perceives this tendency. "In the United States," he says, "it is clear that squalor and misery, and the vices and crimes that spring from them, everywhere increase as the village grows into the city, and the march of development brings the advantages of improved methods of production and exchange." It is, however, in the older and richer States of the Union, he says, that pauperism and distress among the working classes are becoming more painfully apparent. "If there is less deep poverty in San Francisco than in New York, it is only because San Francisco is yet behind New York in all that both cities are striving for. When San Francisco reaches the point where New York now is, who can doubt that there will be also ragged and barefooted children in her streets?"

How it comes to pass that the progress of industrial development, which, according to the prevailing impression of mankind, should result in a wide diffusion of comfort among all classes, is in fact attended, as this author asserts, with an increase of suffering to the lower ranks,—the poor becoming poorer by the same agency which adds to the riches of the wealthy,—is the question which he undertakes to solve. It involves in its very statement a startling para-

dox. If it is progress itself which increases poverty, are we not therefore bound, in the interest of the community, to resist, instead of promoting, those agencies which increase the power of production, and conduce to the "wealth of nations"? Are we not striving against our own cure by encouraging ingenious inventions, improving manual skill, and cultivating human intelligence? Ought we not rather to reverse the wheels of our industrial machinery, and to obstruct, instead of making smooth, the path of commerce and exchange? Furthermore, to assert that progress in skill and knowledge, and in the arts of mechanical contrivance, tends only to grind down the working-class (that is, the mass of a nation) to starvation point, — is not this to arraign the ordinance of Providence, which certainly appears to contemplate and intend the progressive civilization of man? However, in justice to Mr. George it should be said, that, according to his view, it is not the natural constitution of society that is to be blamed; but rather the perverse institutions of man, which thwart the providential scheme, and make progress itself the parent of suffering. And, above all other human institutions, that which he arraigns as the main source of physical deterioration and of moral evil, the prolific injustice which condemns the bulk of a nation to ever-increasing indigence and degradation, is the

private appropriation of the soil. Speaking of rent, — which, without mincing the matter, he designates by the plain name of “robbery,” — he thus recapitulates the evils engendered by that great fundamental wrong :—

“This robbery is not like the robbery of a horse, or a sum of money, that ceases with the act. It is a fresh and continuous robbery, that goes on every day and every hour. It is not from the produce of the past that rent is drawn : it is from the produce of the present. It is a toll levied upon labor constantly and continuously. Every blow of the hammer, every stroke of the pick, every thrust of the shuttle, every throb of the steam-engine, pay it tribute. It levies upon the earnings of the men, who, deep underground, risk their lives, and of those who over white surges hang to reeling masts ; it claims the just reward of the capitalist and the fruits of the inventor’s patient effort ; it takes little children from play and from school, and compels them to work before their bones are hard or their muscles are firm ; it robs the shivering of warmth, the hungry of food, the sick of medicine, the anxious of peace. It debases, and embrutes, and imbitters. It crowds families of eight and ten into a single squalid room ; it herds like swine agricultural gangs of boys and girls ; it fills the gin-palace and groggery with those who have no comfort in their homes ; it makes lads who might be useful men, candidates for prisons and penitentiaries ; it fills brothels with girls who might have known the pure joy of motherhood ; it sends greed and all evil passions prowling through society, as a hard winter drives the wolves to the abodes of men ; it darkens faith in the human soul, and across the reflection of a just and merciful Creator draws the veil of a hard and blind and cruel fate !”

It cannot fail to surprise sober persons, on reading such rant as we have just quoted, that a person of so much intelligence as the writer evidently is, however misguided his views of the economical results of land-ownership, should be able to persuade himself thus summarily to ascribe all the derangements and diseases, physical and moral, of society, to one single cause. Is it possible for any one, who casts an observant eye on the sad condition of the indigent classes in our crowded towns, to believe that the greed of the landed proprietor, and that alone, is the source of all the evil that he sees there? The true causes of that manifold mass of suffering are not easily enumerated. Intemperance, with all the baneful consequences which it entails, not on the individual only, but on his children and posterity, heads the list. Indolence, improvidence, physical disease, inherited weakness of mind or body, vicious dispositions and all manner of evil passions, are the chief factors of this conglomeration of misery. Mere indigence, indeed, is to be met with in the country as well as in the city; but by a natural gravitation the refuse of the community, the great multitude of the feeble and the helpless, those who can not and those who will not work for their own living, the tramp, the criminal, the profligate, and the outcast, flock together and concentrate themselves in the large towns.

These are the camp-followers of the great industrial army, whose headquarters are in the crowded centres of trade and manufacture. Nor is the plague of squalid pauperism peculiar to the populous centres of the Old World. According to Mr. George's own statement, New York is no less burdened than Manchester or Lyons with a degraded and indigent population. How it should be dealt with ; how to rescue from the mass those whom it may be possible to reclaim, to succor such as may be helped to extricate themselves, to restrain those who are abandoned to evil habits from preying on their fellows, — such are the problems which task to the utmost the wisdom of the statesman and the philanthropist. Happily we may say, that in this age, and in our own country, the efforts to cope with such difficulties are more energetic and better directed than perhaps at any former period. Yet the attempt to raise the stone of Sisyphus to the summit is still baffled. According to our American philosopher, however, all the miseries of society have but one neck, which may be severed by a single blow. The neck is Rent, the remedy Confiscation.

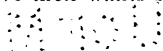
We should, however, do injustice to the author if we did not concede that his arguments against the existing arrangements of the world are founded on something stronger than mere hypothesis or gratuitous assumption. His con-

clusions are worked out by a regularly conducted, however fallacious, process of reasoning; and solid facts are not wanting, though occasionally mingled with rash and extravagant assertions which admit of direct contradiction. He is evidently well versed in the literature of political economy, and knows how to handle, though he perverts and abuses, the weapons of his craft. We are unwilling to weary our readers with technical subtleties, or to embark upon an elaborate vindication of the first principles of economic science; but it is necessary, in the interests of truth, to describe briefly the steps by which Mr. George makes his way to his paradoxical conclusion, and to point out some of the faulty links in his chain of reasoning. He begins by impugning certain leading positions of the orthodox school of economists; and, throwing down the gauntlet to John Stuart Mill, he contradicts the propositions that labor is limited by capital, and that the rate of wages depends on the proportion which the fund applicable to production bears to the number of workmen seeking employment. To Mr. Ricardo's doctrine of rent he in the main accedes, though demurring (not without reason) to the historical unreality of its statement. But to the Malthusian solution of the social problem, so widely at variance with his own, he offers a resolute defiance, and controverts it

with a force of argument which makes this, in our judgment, the most cogent portion of his work. Having thus overthrown, as he considers, the two doctrines which ascribe the insufficient remuneration of labor to the deficiency of capital, or to the pressure of population upon subsistence, he finds the ground cleared for the substitution of his own dogma,—that rent is the fundamental restrictive check upon production, the cause of inadequate wages, and of the consequent indigence and suffering of the working-class.

As the argument against the over-population theory is the strongest, the attempted confutation of the limitation of labor by capital is the weakest, part of the book. The author strives to demolish the prevalent belief that the antagonism on the wages question is between capital and labor, and to establish in lieu of it that the real controversy is that of labor *versus* rent. John Stuart Mill has laid down the law on this head with such perspicuity and force that it requires no little courage to dispute it. The mere statement of the doctrine carries conviction to most minds.

“Industry is limited by capital. . . . There can be no more industry than is supplied with materials to work up and food to eat. Self-evident as the thing is, it is often forgotten that the people of a country are maintained, and have their wants supplied, not by the produce of present



labor, but of the past. They consume what has been produced, not what is about to be produced. Now, of what has been produced, a part only is allotted to the support of productive labor; and there will not and can not be more of that labor than the portion so allotted (which is the capital of the country) can feed, and provide with the materials and instruments of production.” — *Principles of Political Economy*, Book I. chap. v. sect. 1.

In assailing this position Mr. George knocks his head against a stone wall. He labors, with a prodigal waste of ingenuity, to prove that labor is paid, not out of the capital created by antecedent labor, but out of the proceeds of the particular labor itself — that is, out of the value of the thing produced. “Labor,” he says, “always precedes wages: it is from the produce of labor, not from the advance of capital, that wages come. The precise time of the payment of wages is immaterial: the essential point is, that it is after the performance of work.”

The proposition that labor is paid and the industrial machine set a-going, not by means of capital previously laid up, but out of the produce of the specific work for which the payment is made, is supported by a variety of illustrations. Some of these are taken from the primitive stage of a community in which no accumulated capital has as yet come into existence, and the savage hunter or fisher has only

his own hands wherewith to help himself to subsistence; a state of things to which the teachings of political economy, adapted only to the transactions of a civilized community, are manifestly inapplicable. Others are derived from operations of an exceptional kind, such as those in which a gang of Californian gold-miners, or the crew of an American whale-ship, engage together on the terms of a division of the profits among the party; the men being, in fact, co-partners in an adventure, and each of them a capitalist and laborer in one. Such exceptions do but prove the rule. Mr. George thinks that he is giving a death-blow to the received doctrine of capital and labor when he argues that "the assumption that capital supplies labor with materials and maintenance is preposterous; since capital is produced by labor, and there must be labor before there can be capital." That all capital must be originally derived from labor, is a truism; it can come from no other source: but the question is not how capital is originated, but what it does when accumulated. In the infancy of industry, labor must first produce capital; but when industry has been organized, and production is carried on upon an extended scale, whether in agriculture or in manufactures, then the capital which has been hived out of the produce of antecedent labor becomes the motive

power that sets human hands and brains to work. Thus, materials and maintenance for workmen must be provided, at the cost of millions of pounds, for the construction of a railway, some years, it may be, ere a single shilling is returned by the traffic on the line. Thus, also, the applicant for a farm is required to satisfy the landlord that he has at command a capital equal to so many pounds per acre, before he is allowed to enter upon the land, and, of course, long before he can procure a return from his first harvest. But it would be a waste of words to discuss further the untenable position that capital antecedently produced does not supply wages or material to the laborer during the progress of his work. If that be not so, what then, the reader naturally asks, are the functions of capital? Mr. George answers, in somewhat evasive style, that capital does to a certain extent limit the power and aid the productiveness of industry, since it supplies tools and materials, and also facilitates the division of employments,—an answer which virtually admits the disputed law; for in every kind of labor, even the lowest, some implements are needed, and some division of services is found indispensable. But the reason why this writer contests so keenly the economic principle that capital sustains and must therefore limit labor, is that he has committed himself to the main-

tenance of an antagonistic position ; viz., that the real limit to labor is something else, namely, rent, — the obstruction opposed by land-ownership to the common use of land, including in that term all natural agents applicable to production.

Proceeding in his demonstration that land-ownership is the fountain-head of all social derangements, Mr. George finds another theory in his path, which traces the evil to a very different source, — the theory of over-population. The doctrine enunciated by Malthus, carried to more extravagant lengths by some of his followers, and presented in its not least repulsive shape by Mr. Mill, is attacked by Mr. George with no inconsiderable force of invective, ridicule, and accumulation of facts. The refutation of the theory, however, except so far as it removes out of his way a rival solution to his own, does not, as our readers will perceive, advance in any degree the proof of the author's fundamental position, — the condemnation of rent. The argument against over-population may be complete, yet the distress and penury which exist in all communities may be accounted for by many other causes than the proprietorship of the soil. Mr. George, however, fairly takes the Malthusian bull by the horns, and contends, that, whether tested by historical facts or by the analogies of the animal or vegetable

world, the theory of the disproportion of the fecundity of the human race to the potential increase of subsistence entirely breaks down. It must be admitted, of course, by him, as by all, that assuming the utmost power of human propagation to be exercised without limit, unchecked by any prudential regards or fear of consequences, stimulated by perverse legislation, and favored by physical circumstances, the numbers of a people would be likely to outrun their means of maintenance. This is, indeed, a mere truism. But taking the world as it exists, and human beings as they are constituted, pre-supposing only so much prudence as to induce men of ordinary intelligence to abstain from bringing on themselves and their families degradation and ruin, and considering on the other hand the immense development of production which human labor and intelligence are capable of achieving, Mr. George argues that the advance of civilization and industry tends to contract, and not to widen, the interval between the numbers of a people and their means of subsistence. For the question is, as he truly states it, "not in what stage of population is most *subsistence* produced, but in what stage is there exhibited the greatest power of producing *wealth*? For the power of producing wealth *in any form* is the power of producing subsistence, and the consumption of wealth in any form is equiva-

lent to the consumption of subsistence." In other words, the comparison to be made is not between numbers and food, but between numbers and production, since all production is by means of exchange convertible into food.

John Stuart Mill has laid down the Malthusian law in the following manner:—

"A greater number of people cannot, in any given state of civilization, be collectively so well provided for as a smaller. The niggardliness of nature, not the injustice of society, is the cause of the penalty attached to over-population. An unjust distribution of wealth does not aggravate the evil, but, at most, causes it to be somewhat earlier felt. It is in vain to say that all mouths which the increase of mankind calls into existence bring with them hands. The new mouths require as much food as the old ones, and the hands do not produce as much. If all instruments of production were held in joint property by the whole people, and the produce divided with perfect equality among them; and if, in a society thus constituted, industry were as energetic and the produce as ample as at the present time,—there would be enough to make all the existing population extremely comfortable; but when that population had doubled itself, as, with existing habits of the people, under such an encouragement, it undoubtedly would in little more than twenty years, what would then be their condition? Unless the arts of production were in the same time improved to an almost unexampled degree, the inferior soils which must be resorted to, and the more laborious and scantily remunerative cultivation which must be employed on the superior soils, to procure food for so much larger a population, would, by an insuperable necessity, render every individual in the community poorer than before.

If the population continued to increase at the same rate, a time would soon arrive when no one would have more than mere necessities; and, soon after, a time when no one would have a sufficiency of those, and the further increase of population would be arrested by death.” — *Principles of Political Economy*, Book I. chap. xiii.

Mr. George meets this statement with a flat contradiction : —

“All this I deny. I assert that the very reverse of these propositions is true. I assert that in any given state of civilization a greater number of people can collectively be better provided for than a smaller. I assert that the injustice of society, not the niggardliness of nature, is the cause of the want and misery which the current theory attributes to over-population. I assert that the new mouths which an increasing population calls into existence require no more food than the old ones, while the hands they bring with them can in the natural order of things produce more. I assert, that, other things being equal, the greater the population, the greater the comfort which an equitable distribution of wealth would give to each individual. I assert that in a state of equality the natural increase of population would constantly tend to make every individual richer instead of poorer.”

Taking a wide survey of the principal communities both of the ancient and modern world, Mr. George affirms that in no instance has distress been caused by over-production of human beings, but has been everywhere attributable to a stinted production of wealth, — the effect

of oppression or tyranny, of the extortion of the ruling class, of war or rapine, of the insecurity of the fruits of labor, or of the restrictions imposed upon exchange. Where just government and good laws prevail, there the increase of population, by facilitating the division of labor, by multiplying products, and by promoting celerity of exchange, has operated, as it always must operate, to increase wealth, which means to increase subsistence. The most populous nations are now the wealthiest. It is not the countries whose soil is the most fertile, but the countries in which trade is most free, the laws most just, property most secure, — “not Mexico, but Massachusetts; not Brazil, but England,” — that present the greatest examples of productiveness, the largest surplus of wealth over and above the necessities of existence. We must not argue the matter, as the Ricardo school has done, with reference to the potentiality of production on a given section of ground. It is not a question of acre-plats. Through the medium of exchange the whole earth is the area of supply to the community of nations. England at the present time draws largely upon foreign fields for the very bread she eats. Is it therefore to be said that her population is too large for the food she yields, while she is able from her ever-increased powers of production to pay for her imported supplies,

many times over, with the produce of her factories and workshops?

The alleged examples of over-population — India, China, and Ireland — are successively examined; and the misgovernment and oppression which have cramped industry and confiscated its fruits in those countries are assigned as the true cause of the indigence and the famines with which they have been afflicted. There is much truth in these allegations: at the same time we cannot but severely reprobate Mr. George's extravagant assertions in respect to our own two great dependencies. We assent to the conclusion that the real cause of the afflictions of India has been not the "niggardliness of nature," but the rapacity of her past rulers; but we protest strongly against his wild and inflammatory denunciation of the existing English rule as "worse than all the yokes of her many conquerors;" "a weight," he says, "which is literally crushing millions out of existence, and, as shown by English writers, is inevitably tending to a most frightful and wide-spread catastrophe." The writer who gives utterance to these preposterous accusations, on the faith of some sensational paragraphs culled from irresponsible pamphleteers and writers in magazines, while he shuts his eyes to all the palpable evidences of the great advances made by India in wealth and prosperity under British sway, to

the comparative infrequency of those terrific famines that devastated the country under native rule, and to the earnest and benevolent exertions of our Government to mitigate their severity when they do occur, is guilty of a foul libel on the honor and humanity of the British nation.

With regard to Ireland we find Mr. George indulging in the same reckless vehemence of invective. The want and suffering of that country, wrongly attributed to excess of population, is laid by him at the door of absentee proprietors, "who drain away without return at least a fourth of the net produce of the soil;" to the "resident landlords with their horses and hounds, agents, jobbers, middle-men, and bailiffs; to an alien State Church to insult religious prejudices" (we thought it had ceased to exist); "and to an army of policemen and soldiers to overawe and hunt down any opposition to the iniquitous system." "Were it not," he declares, "for the enervating influence which the history of the world proves to be the effect of abject poverty, it would be difficult to resist something like a feeling of contempt for a race who, stung by such wrongs, have only occasionally murdered a landlord."

Over-population, it should always be borne in mind, is a relative term. There is no absolute standard of numbers to the square mile.

With a soil fully cultivated, with an adequate supply of capital, with an ingenious and industrious population, with just laws and unrestricted trade, there is no doubt that a country may thrive though its population should exceed in density any of which we have had experience. Reverse these conditions, and a country will be over-peopled with a fourth part of the population which revels in abundance in another. It is simply a question of the ratio of numbers to production. The Ireland of to-day, distracted, turbulent, with its half-starved people dependent almost on a single industry, is said, and not without color of reason, to be over-peopled. Ireland united, peaceable, law-abiding, with her large natural resources developed by capital and industry, might maintain in comfort a much larger population than at present. We are not now laying blame for what is past, on one party or another: we assert only that a long sequence of mismanagement, and a deplorable perverseness of policy, are sufficient to account for the disastrous spectacle which Ireland now presents, without attributing her miseries to so inadequate and irrelevant a cause as excess in the numbers of her people.

We are unable to give further space to that part of Mr. George's work which is directed against the doctrines of Malthus. There is

much in it which the adherents to the over-population theory will find it difficult to controvert ; but it is less necessary to dwell upon it here, since, as we have before remarked, it forms only a parenthesis in the writer's argument, which, being primarily aimed against the institution of private property in land, is but indirectly, if at all, affected by the proof or disproof of the Malthusian dogma.

Recurring to the main position which he labors to establish, we find Mr. George asserting, with the confidence which gives to a paradox the air of an axiom, the following proposition :—

“ The reason why, in spite of the increase of productive power, wages constantly tend to a minimum which will give but a bare living, is, that, with increase in productive power, rent tends to even greater increase, thus producing a constant tendency to the forcing-down of wages.”

And in another place he reiterates the great economical heresy with which his mind is possessed :—

“ The principal is as universal as it is obvious. That rent *must* reduce wages, is as clear as that, the greater the subtractor, the less the remainder. That rent *does* reduce wages, any one, wherever situated, can see by merely looking around him.”

We are thus brought face to face with the capital fallacy which lies at the root of this

impeachment of land-ownership. Wages, it is alleged, are something subtracted from rent. Now, rent, through the operation of causes which the progress of wealth and population necessarily develops, tends constantly to increase. Wages, therefore, will simultaneously grow smaller; and thus pauperism inevitably overtakes labor. In the name of political economy, on the authority of all those eminent writers who have formulated the laws of national wealth into a science, — nay, in the name of common-sense itself, — we protest against, and denounce as equally false and mischievous, this assertion that wages are a subtraction from rent.

Mr. George has himself stated, in one passage of his book, the theory of production. "Three things," he says, "unite to production, — labor, capital, and land. Three parties divide the produce, — the laborer, the capitalist, and the land-owner." But in another place, as we have seen, when treating of capital, he virtually eliminates the function of the capitalist. "Capital, after all," he says, "is merely labor:" the laborer is really paid out of the produce of his own work; "he pays himself." In effect, land-owner and laborer are the joint producers. They divide the produce. It is simply a subtraction sum: the more the land-owner appropriates to himself, the less is the balance left for his humble coadjutor, the working-man.

The writer who thus argues has, nevertheless, accepted in explicit terms the doctrine of rent as enunciated by Ricardo and those who have adopted, in a more or less modified form, his well-known exposition. Rent has been correctly described by a recent writer, Mr. Thorold Rogers, as "all that remains of the price at which the produce of land is sold when the cost of production is deducted." Consequently, "rent is paid last," when all the other contributories have been satisfied. True, it is estimated and stipulated beforehand. The cultivator, before he applies to the owner for a farm, calculates beforehand how much surplus it is estimated to yield above the cost of production. That rent he binds himself to pay. Should his estimate prove fallacious, and the cost of cultivation leave him less than his fair remunerative profit, he will as soon as possible demand a reduction of the rent, or he will throw up his tenancy. Of the cost of production, labor forms on most farms the heaviest item. But labor, like other commodities, has its current or market price. That rate cannot be lowered to meet the need of a particular employer. The farmer cannot say to Hodge or Giles, "My landlord makes me pay so high a rent that I am obliged to cut down your wages." Those wages must bear the same rate as other employers in the district pay, other-

wise Hodge or Giles will betake himself elsewhere. They must be paid, too, week by week, long before the produce is realized; and the rent which the land can bear is not ultimately ascertained and paid until after all the laborers have been settled with. The result is just the same, whether the cultivator farms his own land or is the tenant of another. In the former case, as in the latter, the whole cost of production, the wages of labor at the standard rate, the interest on capital, and the farmer's own remuneration for superintendence *quâ* cultivator, must first be subtracted; and then the surplus will remain to him *quâ* land-owner, as representing the rent. But in neither case, nor in any case, do the land-owner and the laborer meet together, either actually or constructively, as Mr. George supposes, to work a sum in arithmetic, of which the term representing rent shall be just as much as the land-owner thinks proper to exact. The wages, on the contrary, are a fixed rate, — a first charge, — a primary element in the cost of production. It would be as reasonable to say, in the case of a railway company, that the dividend to the shareholders must first be paid out of the earnings, leaving what remains to meet the working expenses of the line, as to say that the farm-laborer must needs take what the landlord leaves him after first satisfying his own claims in respect of rent. Mr. George

must know little indeed of our English tenant-farmer system if he is not aware, that, in point of fact, landlord and laborer do not come together at all. There is, to use a legal phrase, "no privity of contract" between them. The farmer must pay as wages the sum which the law of the market prescribes to him ; the landlord can get no more than the ultimate surplus which remains, after the tenant has recouped both himself and his laborers for the cost of production.

It is quite true, indeed, and not at all inconsistent with what has now been stated, that in every progressive community the increased rental of the soil is a marked—and, except during a temporary crisis, such as this country is now passing through, an invariable—feature. The demand for land and the value of land grow at each successive stage in the development of wealth. The greater productiveness of labor, the increase of population, the extension of commerce, the multitudinous new wants and ever-growing luxury of a prosperous community,—all contribute to enhance the value of the soil. New lands, before regarded as unimprovable, are brought into use by a more highly skilled agriculture. Wastes are reclaimed, forests cleared, morasses drained ; the mere ground itself, without reference to its agricultural capacity, is needed for houses and factories, for

roads and railways, for a thousand purposes of business and accommodation, as well as of luxury and display. The artificial wants of an advanced state of society are almost as urgent as the natural. Again, the lands already under cultivation derive a new and adventitious value from the proximity of roads, of railways, of markets, and of populous towns. Thus comes into existence that "unearned increment" which John Stuart Mill, while recognizing the vested rights of the land-owner in the original soil, regarded as an element of value extrinsic to those rights, and justly to be claimed on behalf of the community at large. Such a claim seems modest indeed, in the presence of Mr. George's exorbitant demands. We cannot now enter into a discussion of the unearned-increment theory, and can only observe in passing, that there are three distinct grounds on which it must be pronounced impracticable. (1) If the State is entitled to sweep off the anticipated profits, it would be bound, *pari ratione*, to indemnify the owner against prospective loss on his investment. (2) It would impair or destroy the great motive for speculative improvements, were the State to step in and claim the result of the investment when successful. Lastly, and above all, it would be found utterly impracticable to draw the line between the increased value due to the skill or diligence of the owner,

and that which was the outgrowth of external causes.

“The increased power of production,” Mr. George goes on to say, “has everywhere added to the value of land: nowhere has it added to the value of labor.” The condition of the working-classes, he declares, has in civilized communities been so grievously depressed in consequence of the progressive rise of rent, that he considers the circumstances of the modern laborer in such communities inferior even to the lot of the savage. He goes so far as to say this:—

“I think no one who will open his eyes to the facts can resist the conclusion, that there are in the heart of our civilization large classes with whom the veriest savage could not afford to exchange. It is my deliberate opinion, that if, standing on the threshold of being, one were given the choice of entering life as a Terra del Fuegian, a black fellow of Australia, an Esquimau in the Arctic Circle, or among the lowest classes in such a highly civilized country as Great Britain, he would make infinitely the better choice in selecting the lot of the savage.”

“There are some,” he adds, and not without reason, “to whom this may seem like exaggeration.” We have little doubt, indeed, that such will be the prevailing sentiment of his readers.

There are other passages in the book which describe, in highly colored and inflammatory language, the present condition of our English

workingmen; not the scum and refuse of the great towns, be it observed, but the regularly employed laborers and artisans. Such representations may accord with the conception sometimes formed of our industrial organization in America; but they do not correspond, we venture to assert, with the reality of things. In another paragraph Mr. George commits himself to a very bold allegation. "Free trade," he says, "has enormously increased the wealth of Great Britain, without lessening pauperism. It has simply increased rent."

If by "pauperism" he meant that which is technically so called,—that is, relief afforded by the poor-rates,—Mr. George might have satisfied himself, by reference to the most easily accessible proofs, that such a statement would be quite incorrect. In fact, pauperism in this sense has decreased since the era of free trade. The numbers receiving indoor and outdoor relief have, relatively to the increase of population, become not greater but less. If, on the other hand, the term "pauperism" is used in a more loose signification, as descriptive of the general condition of the working-classes in England, again the allegation is untrue. Forty years ago the proportion of the population receiving relief under the Poor Law was six per cent: it is now three per cent. The wages of labor employed both in agriculture

and manufacture are, generally speaking, higher than in the days of the Corn Laws, not in pecuniary amount only, but even more in purchasing power. The great fiscal reductions that have taken place since the late Sir Robert Peel entered upon his career of commercial and financial policy in 1842 have resulted in cheapening to a large extent those articles which enter into the consumption of the masses. Bread, tea, coffee, cocoa, cheese, soap, and many more articles of the first necessity, are now much lower in price. Fuel, postage, locomotion, are largely reduced. The means of a sound elementary education are brought within the reach of the poor. The hours of labor are shortened, — a change in itself equivalent to an increase of wages. Two principal articles only have become dearer, — butcher's-meat and house-rent. The high price of the former has been caused in great measure by the casualties of unfavorable seasons and cattle-disease; but the efforts made in several quarters to open fresh sources of supply from those parts of the world where meat is superabundant, though hitherto only partially successful, will, as we may fairly anticipate, ultimately abate the present extravagant prices of animal food. The improvement of the dwellings of the industrial classes is now engaging the earnest attention both of philanthropists and of the legislature, and public

opinion is setting forcibly in that direction. On the whole, we may fairly assert, both that the physical condition of the working-class has, during the last forty years, been steadily rising to a higher standard, and also that the privations and hardships still incident to their lot are receiving, whenever they are brought to light, an amount of attention and solicitude which contrast very favorably with former periods.

After an examination of the causes which tend, in his view, to depress the rate of wages, and to keep the lower classes in civilized communities in a state of chronic indigence and squalor, and after dismissing as inadequate the remedies and mitigations hitherto proposed, such as education, frugality, and temperance, economy in government, trade combination, and co-operation in labor, the author of "*Progress and Poverty*" arrives at the conclusion of his argument: the one true remedy for the disorders and disasters of society, — the nationalization of the soil. "We must make land common property." How is this to be done? The landowner must be divested, by legislative decree, of his possessions.

The first question that arises on this proposal is the very obvious one, "Is it just?" This test is at once accepted, and Mr. George proceeds to inquire what is the true foundation of the right of property; and he determines it to

be this: "The right of a man to himself, to the use of his own powers, to the enjoyment of the fruits of his own exertions." There is, to every thing that is produced by labor, a clear and indisputable right to exclusive use and enjoyment; which is perfectly consistent with justice, as it descends from the original producer in whom it vested by natural law.

"The laws of Nature are the decrees of the Creator. There is written in them no recognition of right, save that of labor. . . .

"This right of ownership that springs from labor," he continues, "excludes the possibility of any other right of ownership. If a man be rightfully entitled to the produce of his labor, then no one can be rightfully entitled to the ownership of any thing which is not the produce of his labor, or the labor of some one else from whom the right has passed to him. If production give to the producer the right to exclusive possession and enjoyment, there can rightfully be no exclusive possession and enjoyment of any thing not the production of labor, and the recognition of private property in land is a wrong. For the right to the produce of labor cannot be enjoyed without the right to the free use of the opportunities offered by nature, and to admit the right of property in these is to deny the right of property in the produce of labor. When non-producers can claim as rent a portion of the wealth created by producers, the right of the producers to the fruits of their labor is to that extent denied.

"There is no escape from this position. To affirm that a man can rightfully claim exclusive ownership in his own labor when embodied in material things, is to

deny that any one can rightfully claim exclusive ownership in land. To affirm the rightfulness of property in land is to affirm a claim which has no warrant in nature, as against a claim founded in the organization of man and the laws of the material universe."

There exist, it is argued, two classes of things. The characteristic of one class of things is, that "they embody labor," are brought into existence by human exertion, their existence or non-existence, their increase or diminution, depending on man. The essential character of the other class is, that they do not "embody labor," and exist irrespective of human exertion, and irrespective of men. Land, the writer contends, must belong to the latter class. He goes on, —

"If we are all here by the equal permission of the Creator, we are all here with an equal title to the enjoyment of his bounty, — with an equal right to the use of all that nature so impartially offers. This is a right which is natural and inalienable; it is a right which vests in every human being as he enters the world, and which, during his continuance in the world, can be limited only by the equal rights of others. There is in nature no such thing as a fee-simple in land. There is on earth no power which can rightfully make a grant of exclusive ownership in land. If all existing men were to unite to grant away their equal rights, they could not grant away the right of those who follow them. For what are we but tenants for a day? Have we made the earth, that we should determine the rights of those who after us shall tenant it in their turn? The Almighty, who created the earth for man and man for the earth, has entailed

it upon all the generations of the children of men by a decree written upon the constitution of all things, — a decree which no human action can bar, and no prescription determine. Let the parchments be ever so many, or possession ever so long, natural justice can recognize no right in one man to the possession and enjoyment of land that is not equally the right of all his fellows. Though his titles have been acquiesced in by generation after generation, to the landed estates of the Duke of Westminster the poorest child that is born in London to-day has as much right as has his eldest son. Though the sovereign people of the State of New York consent to the landed possessions of the Astors, the puniest infant that comes wailing into the world in the squalidest room of the most miserable tenement-house becomes at that moment seized of an equal right with the millionnaires ; and it is robbed if the right is denied " (p. 52).

The argument that there can be no private property in land, because it is the work of the Creator, and not of man, is a strange fallacy. Man does not confine his property to the work of his own hands. He does not make diamonds, or silver and gold, or trees or vegetables. They are natural products, or the result of natural forces. They exist by no human art or intervention. He digs up the diamond, he extracts the precious metals, he plants the trees, he cultivates the vegetables. It is the alliance of man's labor with nature which gives birth to the wealth of the world. Just so it is with land. Land without the application of labor in some form or other is no more value than so much

sea. What was the value of the American and Australian continents without a domestic animal, and with but few useful plants, and a barbarous and scanty population? The labor of civilized man has imparted to them whatever value they now possess, and has created the right of property in the land in the same proportion. That right of property may be exchanged for money, or transmitted by descent, at the will of the owner; but the distinction sought to be drawn between land and other forms of wealth is entirely fallacious.

It must appear somewhat strange, that Mr. George, while asserting the paramount right of every man to the produce of his own labor, or to the produce which he has derived by rightful title from the original producer, can shut his eyes to the obvious fact, that no small part of the landed property of every civilized country has been originally acquired by means of the earnings or savings of labor; has been exchanged for labor, or bought with funds which have been previously accumulated from that source alone. Has not the man who has thus acquired an exclusive property in land as valid a title to his plat of ground as he who has converted his earnings into household-furniture or food, into railway stock or three-per-cent consols? Is there no "embodied labor" in the little section of freehold which the frugal artisan has

purchased through the medium of the Savings Bank or the Building Society? To drive out such a man from his holding as an intruder and a trespasser, on the plea that "in nature there is no such thing as a fee-simple in land," — would not this be in reality a fouler outrage on the rights of labor than the most unscrupulous monopolist has ever been guilty of? What would be unjust in regard to the original investor of his labor in the soil would be equally so in regard to those, whether purchasers, legatees, or heirs, to whom, under the sanction of law, the property had been transmitted. Upon the author's own showing, all titles to land thus good in their inception, as being acquired with the earnings of labor, must be exempted, supposing it were possible to separate such portions from the mass, from the sentence of deprivation.

Mr. George next enters into an historical investigation of the origin of property in land, and pronounces the larger portion of such possessions to have been tainted *ab initio* with violence and fraud, — a statement which at the present date it is scarcely worth while to contest. He asserts also, on the authority of certain legal antiquaries and learned men who have made researches into the institutions of primitive communities, that tribal or communal proprietorship was the original form in which the

land was held in early times, severalty of tenure being of later introduction. This is probably true; but it is not less certain, that, although relics of such joint ownership survive to a limited extent both in this and in other countries, the most advanced nations of the world have long since, in the natural course of things, outgrown and discarded it. It was abandoned, to use the writer's own words, "when the development of agriculture had imposed the necessity of recognizing exclusive possession of land in order to secure the exclusive enjoyment of the results of the labor expended in cultivating it." As Blackstone has said, "Necessity begat Occupancy;" the wants of society and the need of improved methods of agriculture necessitated the exclusive appropriation of the soil. But, whatever be the historical account of the matter, the rights of the land-owner at the present time rest on a much more solid basis than antiquarian precedents, — the same security upon which all the most valued rights of the community depend, even that of life itself, — the guaranty of the law. The title of prescription, once complete, cancels all original defects of acquisition, heals all flaws of title, legitimates all past transfers and successions. In every system of jurisprudence, time gives title. But for this security, the rights of every man in the community would be founded on a quicksand. Society would be

rent in pieces by an internecine war between the Have-alls and the Want-alls.

“We must take peaceful possession, when it has continued for a certain time, as absolute evidence of just title; for, were we not to do that, there would be no end to dispute, and no secure possession of any thing. It is this common-sense principle that is expressed in the Statute of Limitations, — in the doctrine of vested rights. This is the reason why it is held — and as to most things held justly — that peaceable possession for a certain time cures all defects of title.”

Sound words these; but what is most remarkable is, that they are the words of Mr. George himself, contained, not in the work now under consideration, but in a small pamphlet recently published by him on the Irish land-question.

Is it necessary at the present day to demonstrate the folly and iniquity of these schemes of confiscation, which could never be realized but at the cost of a struggle which would convulse society? Do the advocates of spoliation imagine that those who now own the soil of this country — we do not speak only of the lords of great domains, but also of the petty freeholders of fields and tenements — would tamely submit to be dispossessed of their properties, inherited, perhaps, through a long descent, cherished with the utmost tenacity of pride, interest, and affection, and associated with all they hold most dear? The revolution — for it would be noth-

ing less — which should extinguish all existing titles in the soil, could only be effected at the cost of a frightful civil struggle; and the desolation which it would cause would only be effaced when, after a period of great suffering, society had reverted to that institution which is necessary to the order and stability of every civilized community. Nor can any one but a fanatical theorist suppose that the right of property in the soil could be extinguished without undermining the security of all other proprietary rights. The title of the land-owner is based on the most solemn guaranties, the oldest traditions, the most obligatory compacts of public faith. If all these bulwarks are swept away by the force of confiscation, what prospect would there be of immunity to the fund-holder? The same reasoning would apply to both. How easy for those who now preach the doctrine that property in land is a “robbery,” because the original donee some centuries ago was enfeoffed by a usurper or a marauder, to contend also that the debt by which the industry of the country was mortgaged, and which was laid by our progenitors upon the shoulders of succeeding generations, originated in wars waged by corrupt statesmen for the purpose of cementing the fabric of despotism, and crushing the liberties of foreign peoples! What says Mr. George himself? “When a title rests but on force, no

complaint can be made when force annuls it. Whenever the people, having the power, choose to annul those titles, no objection can be made in the name of justice." Whenever, then, "the people choose," and have the power, the end of all security of title, whether real or personal, will have come, and anarchy and bankruptcy may shake hands over the grave of justice.

The audacious justification of plunder which our American reformer thus propounds needs little refutation beyond the mere statement of the scheme, and we might perhaps spare ourselves the trouble of exposing the futility of the methods by which he proposes to work it out. But it may be worth while to exhibit briefly the impracticable and iniquitous character of the proposal. Other theorists have expressed in recent times their approval of the principle of the expropriation of the landholders ; but there are differences among them, especially on the question of compensation for the loss. M. Laveleye, whom we regret to number among those who avow themselves unfriendly to the system of individual ownership, is not an advocate, if we rightly apprehend his views, of uncompensated resumption by the state. Mr. Herbert Spencer, who, in his work called "Social Statics," distinctly propounds the dogma that "equity does not permit property in land," and that the right of mankind at large to the earth's sur-

face is still valid, "all deeds, customs, and laws notwithstanding," has still qualms about seizing the people's lost inheritance without an indemnity to the men in possession.

"No doubt great difficulties must attend the resumption, by mankind at large, of their rights to the soil. The question of compensation to existing proprietors is a complicated one,—one that perhaps cannot be settled in a strictly equitable manner. Had we to deal with the parties who originally robbed the human race of its heritage, we might make short work of the matter. But, unfortunately, most of our present land-owners are men who have, either mediately or immediately,—either by their own acts, or by the acts of their ancestors,—given for their estates equivalents of honestly earned wealth, believing that they were investing their savings in a legitimate manner. To justly estimate and liquidate the claims of such, is one of the most intricate problems society will one day have to solve. But with this perplexity, and our extrication from it, abstract morality has no concern. Men, having got themselves into the dilemma by disobedience to the law, must get out of it as well as they can, and with as little injury to the landed class as may be." — *Social Statics*, p. 142.

But the American economist, a much bolder man, goes a long way beyond the English philosopher. "Herbert Spencer says, 'Had we to deal with the parties who originally robbed the human race of its heritage, we might make short work of the matter.' Why not make short work of the matter anyhow?" asks Mr. George.

“It is not merely a robbery in the past: it is a robbery in the present, — a robbery that deprives of their birth-right the infants that are now coming into the world! Why should we hesitate about making short work of such a system? Because I was robbed yesterday, and the day before, and the day before that, is it any reason that I should suffer myself to be robbed to-day and to-morrow? any reason that I should conclude that the robber has acquired a vested right to rob me?

“If the land belongs to the people, why continue to permit land-owners to take the rent, or compensate them in any manner for the loss of rent? . . .

“If we apply the same maxims of justice that have been formulated by land-owners and law, and are applied every day in English and American courts to disputes between man and man, we shall not only not think of giving the landholders any compensation for the land, but shall take all the improvements and whatever else they may have as well.

“But I do not propose, and I do not suppose that any one else will propose, to go so far. It is sufficient if the people resume the ownership of the land. Let the land-owners retain their improvements and personal property in secure possession.”

Mr. George, therefore, concedes that “improvements,” whether made by the existing owner or his predecessors in title, ought to be paid for. That which the state may resume without any compensation is the bare soil itself.

But in that case a problem of insuperable difficulty presents itself. Take the land of England in its existing state, — transformed, as it

has been, by the skill and industry of successive generations, and by the expenditure upon it of an amount of capital that does not admit of calculation, with all the artificial constructions and substructions that have been laid upon or under it, with the surface, the subsoil, the natural properties of the earth itself, transmuted and impregnated by the various appliances of chemistry and culture—and then draw, if you can, the just line between the mere soil itself which is reclaimed as the patrimony of the people, and the “improvements” which should belong, as is conceded, to the expropriated owner. There is but one mode of dealing with such a Gordian knot as this. “*Ense recidendum est.*” Mr. Spencer, in the passage above cited, intimates as much: “If the complexity is such as to defy scrutiny, the fault is with those who got themselves into the dilemma.” “A short method with land-owners” would have to be devised. It might be proposed, perhaps, that they should be paid at a valuation of so much of the improvements as could be proved to have been made within a definite date, or that the value should be appraised by a rough estimate, and compensation be made by a lump sum. If such an assessment should appear to be a hap-hazard one, whose fault is it but that of the land-owners, who were intruders and trespassers from the beginning? Are they not

leniently dealt with in being excused from paying back the mesne profits?

The authority of Professor Fawcett is cited by Mr. George for an estimate of the capitalized rental value of the land of England at £4,500,000,000, about five to six times the amount of the national debt. Say that the land-owners were allowed one-half of that sum in respect of their improvements, the operation would impose a new public debt, about thrice the amount of the present one, upon the shoulders of the nation. That being done, the state would then be placed, according to the scheme of Mr. George, in the shoes of the land-owners. The rent of the whole soil of England would be commuted into a tax, in which all other taxes, being repealed, would merge, and which would yield, it is alleged, a return sufficient to defray all the expenses of government, the interest of all debts charged on the revenue, so long as they might subsist, and over and above these payments a surplus, available in various ways for the improvement, recreation, and gratification of the community, — "*panem et circenses*" on a magnificent scale. The process, as described by the author of "Social Statics," and adopted by his American disciple, looks beautifully simple upon paper :—

"Such a doctrine," he says, "is consistent with the highest state of civilization, may be carried out without

involving a community of goods, and need cause no very serious revolution in existing arrangements. The change required would simply be a change of landlords. Separate ownerships would merge into the joint-stock ownership of the public. Instead of being in the possession of individuals, the country would be held by the great corporate body, society. Instead of leasing his acres from an isolated proprietor, the farmer would lease them from the nation. Instead of paying his rent to the agent of Sir John or his Grace, he would pay it to an agent or deputy-agent of the community. Stewards would be public officials instead of private ones; and tenancy the only land-tenure.' — *Social Statics*, p. 144.

The project, as explained by Mr. George, teems with absurdities. Instead of relieving burdens, and replenishing revenue, it would aggravate the one, and drain the other. The authors of such schemes should take counsel with Cocker. How argue with men who conceive that the public finances can be recruited by reducing to insolvency and ruin that class of the community, who, by their expenditure and mode of living, are directly or indirectly among the largest contributors to the public revenue?

But there is one glaring inconsistency between the scheme of confiscation, when considered in detail, and the main position of Mr. George's argument. Throughout his whole volume, but especially in the chapters devoted to economical disquisition, his aim is to prove that the existence of rent is the great obstacle to

the prosperity of the nation, the cause of insufficient wages, and the consequent penury and degradation of the working-classes. Rent is, according to him, the root of all social evils ; and why ? Because, according to his perverse misreading of economic laws, rent and labor divide between them the fruits of industry. Labor gets too little, because rent gets too much. Again, enterprise is checked, advance is impeded, because those whose strong arms and active brains might procure ample returns for their exertions are shut out, by the monopolists of the land, from the use of those natural agents which are the raw material of industry, and are debarred from admission to the soil which is the field of man's productive powers. Only take down the fences which now bar access to the soil, and the crowd of needy laborers at present standing idle might enter in at once, and reap the rewards of their exertions.

But supposing rent to be, as Mr. George from first to last contends, the great enemy to national well-being, does the author of this great scheme of nationalization propose thereby to abolish rent ? Nothing of the sort. His proposal amounts simply to a change of landlords. Rent is to exist still, but to be levied in the shape of a tax ; the tax-collector takes the place of the lord's steward. The payment, instead of going into the pocket of the proprietor, is

diverted into the coffers of the state. The *dramatis personæ* only are changed; the plot and the outcome of the drama are the same. It is only a new way to pay old rents.

We cannot allow Mr. George to have it both ways. Either rent, that intolerable burden, would have to be made easy to the tenants by a large reduction of its amount, or it would not. If the new landlord, the state, should continue to exact the same sum in tax as the private landlord took in rent, where would be the benefit to the laborer and the artisan? They would still be excluded from the soil, and mulcted of their share of nature's bounties, as before. If, on the other hand, the new rent is to be levelled down, so as to relieve materially the parties liable to the payment of it, — if a Land Office is to be opened, and grants are to be liberally made to all who may require sites for various undertakings, or materials for their industry to work upon, — what then becomes of the public revenue, derivable, after the abolition of all other taxes, from this single source? Whence will the compensation conceded to proprietors for their improvements be forthcoming? How will the interest of the national debt be provided for? What funds will remain to carry out the various designs for the relief and regeneration of the community?

It is needless to do more than to indicate

very briefly the enormous abuses which would inevitably attach to any scheme for converting the state into the universal landlord, and vesting the administration of all the landed estate of the country in political hands. We can form but a slight conception of the favoritism, the intrigues, the jobbery, and the venality, which the exercise of such a power would involve. A more effective instrument for corrupting and demoralizing society could hardly be devised than would be afforded by what is mildly called the "nationalization of the land."

Enough, and it may be thought more than enough, has been said to expose the folly of a scheme so extravagant in its pretensions, so crude and self-contradictory in the methods proposed for its execution, as this panacea which Mr. George has prescribed for the sufferings of humanity. It has not even the merit of novelty; for the expropriation of the land-owners has been advocated before by several projectors of more or less note, in Germany and France, as well as in our own country. We should not have thought it necessary to vindicate the existing institutions of society from assailants who might be so wrong-headed as to believe that the inevitable sufferings of mankind were to be remedied by so quixotic an experiment, or so unscrupulous as to desire to reap for themselves a harvest of license and spoliation. But Mr.

George is an innovator of a different type. He attacks the fortress of property in the guise of a political economist. He sets to work, by unsettling and confusing the notions of unwary readers upon the leading principles of the science, to undermine the institution to which these principles, rightly interpreted, lend the firmest support, by proving it to be conducive to the well-being of society. The style of the book, and the air of philanthropy and righteous indignation with which the crusade against vested interests is preached, make it dangerous reading for those whose convictions on economic subjects are not firmly based ; still more for the half-educated and ill-informed, who may be captivated by the prospects of relief and benefit held out to them, but are unable to detect the fallacy of the arguments. In fact, we cannot regard in any other light than as a public mischief the promiscuous circulation, in a popular shape, of this deleterious compound of anarchical principles and spurious political economy.

We are not of those who regard property in land with a blind and servile idolatry, or treat it, like the poet's "Northern Farmer," as an object of fetich-worship. We do not conceive of the landed estate of the kingdom as resting on a tenure of irresponsible and inalienable right, with which any interference whatever by the supreme authority of the State is a species

of sacrilege. That "property has its duties as well as its rights," we shall ever strenuously maintain; and if those duties should be repudiated, or flagrantly neglected, a power must exist somewhere to enforce the obligation. Those "large-acred" men, if any such still exist, who hold that a "man may do what he likes with his own," need to be reminded of the original principles of our Constitution. The ancient tenures of this kingdom were based, as we know, upon obligations of duty and conditions of honorable service. It stands upon high authority even now, as a legal axiom, that "the idea of absolute ownership is unknown to the English law; that no man is in law the absolute owner of lands." "It is a fundamental rule, that all the lands within this realm were originally derived from the Crown, either by express grant or tacit intendment of law; and therefore the Queen is sovereign lady or lady paramount, either mediate or immediate, of all and every parcel of land within the realm."<sup>1</sup>

The constitutional title of the Crown here asserted, though not likely to be put in force to the detriment of the subject, involves the principle that the right of land-ownership is subordinate to the supreme control and dominion of the state, should an occasion arise for exercising

<sup>1</sup> See Joshua Williams's *Law of Real Property*, and the authorities there cited, pp. 17-119.

its imprescriptible prerogative in the cause of the *salus populi*. That principle is acknowledged, indeed, to a large extent, in our ordinary legislation, under which the property of individuals is frequently appropriated, subject always to the payment of compensation, for the execution of works of public necessity or advantage. The subordination of private rights to the common good is here fully recognized; and in this point of view we think that the application of such terms as "confiscation" and "plunder" to certain legislative measures has of late been too lightly and inconsiderately made. But those opprobrious terms are by no means out of place when the rights of ownership, fortified by long prescription, are held up to popular odium as illegal and iniquitous, and when it is gravely recommended that they should be swept away by an indiscriminate act of forfeiture, without any compensation to the deprived proprietors, and for the purpose of effecting a social revolution which could only result in disastrous consequences to the nation at large.

Writers like Mr. George and Mr. Herbert Spencer are at war not only with the first principles of political economy and of law, of social order and domestic life, but with the elements of human nature. Man does not live by bread alone. Man does not labor solely for his own

daily sustenance. He labors for others: he lives by the past, and for the future. The strongest incentive to industry, economy, and good living, is the desire to provide for the future, and to hand down to our children some results of our own lives. That desire is one of the chief bonds of the human family, and it consecrates the right of property. The capital so saved must be invested; and, being invested, it becomes equally useful to those who own it, and to those who employ it, although their positions in life may widely differ. Land has hitherto been regarded as the most secure of all investments, and for that reason it is the least remunerative. To attack the rights of private property in land, is to attack property in its most concrete form. If landed property is not secure, no property can be protected by law; and the transmission of wealth, be it large or small, is extinguished. With it expires the perpetuity of family life, and that future which cheers and ennobles the labor of the present by the hopes of the future. These are the doctrines of communism, fatal alike to the welfare of society, and to the moral character of man. Nowhere are they more emphatically rejected than by the most democratic communities,—by the land-holding peasants of France and by the homesteads of North America. They are not only false and mischievous, but absurd

when addressed to a class of men who are never likely to have an acre of land, and who would starve on an acre of land if they had it. We can only regard Mr. George's work and Mr. Davitt's speeches as a part of the revolutionary warfare now waged by certain Americans, or Hiberno-Americans, against the institutions of this country, which degrades them to the level of the Socialists of Germany, the Nihilists of Russia, and the Communards of Paris.

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